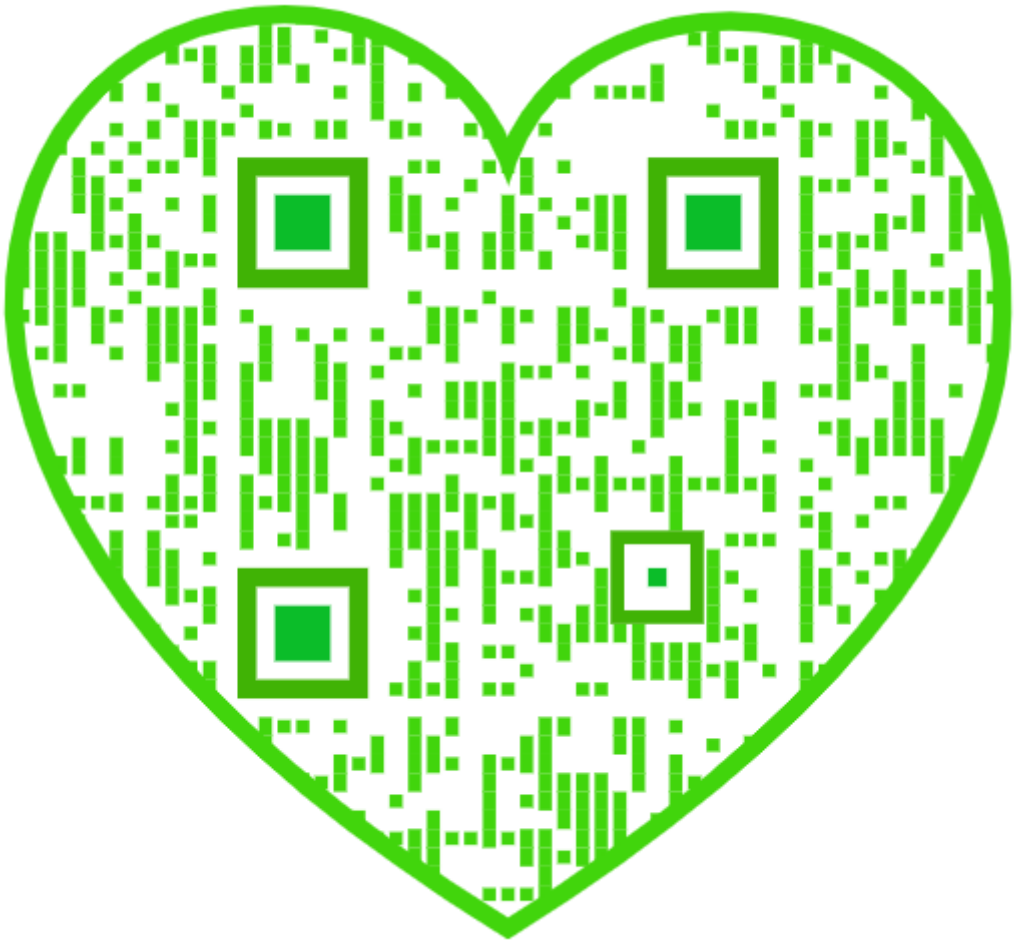
THE BOOK OF DECORATIVE FURNITURE



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THE BOOK OF
DECORATIVE FURNITURE

THE HALL, HATFIELD HOUSE
By Joseph Nash

THE BOOK OF DECORATIVE FURNITURE

ITS FORM, COLOUR, & HISTORY

BY

EDWIN FOLEY

FELLOW OF THE INSTITUTE OF DESIGNERS

Author of "Some Old Woodwork," "Our Household Gods: their Design and Designers," &c. &c.

With One Hundred Reproductions in Full-Colour Facsimile of Drawings by the Author, and One Thousand Text Illustrations; Correlated Charts of British Woodwork Styles and Contemporaries; Decorative Furnishing Accessories; Principal Trees; &c. &c.

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME I.

NEW YORK

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

1911

PREFACE

A SURVEY of the world's beautiful woodwork is before us. My first desire is, as artist, to express gratitude to owners, in this country and abroad, for their assent to the illustration of their choicest heirlooms; and, as author, to add thanks for information — often from family chronicles and necessitating considerable research—relative to these examples, which has materially increased the interest of the colour plates.

Quite one of the most delightful features in the preparation of *The Book of Decorative Furniture* has been the opportunity of meeting conservators of old work, and of gauging the wealth of fine furniture remaining in this country. Though it should be superfluous, one must not omit to point out that the consent of owners to the publication of examples from their private collections is an act of courtesy to the public, and does not indicate that the collection is open to public inspection.

In expressing obligations, home and foreign state authorities are included. Without the exceptional facilities accorded, certain important and previously little-known specimens must have been omitted. Whilst, with diffidence, deliberately dissenting at times from a few accepted conclusions, I have been greatly helped by some of the works—old and new—upon various aspects of decorative woodwork history. I trust my obligations have been fully acknowledged in the classified Bibliography forming part of this publication; but when one has been studying a subject for a considerable time, it is obviously impossible to trace the possible source of every detail or idea. If, therefore, every

such source is not included, this general acknowledgment will, I hope, be accepted in lieu thereof.

The term Furniture, originally implying a store or supply of anything (as is obvious if its origin is the old High German *Frummen*, to accomplish) is here employed in its more restricted popular sense to signify movable articles, almost invariably of wood, used in the home for personal rest, work, and pleasure, or for the storing of household requisites and ornaments. In many cases, however, for the better presentation of a style, I have not scrupled to include typical examples of fixed woodwork, such as panellings and chimney-pieces among the illustrations.

Chronological sequence has been adhered to in the arrangement of the plates and matter; with the obvious exceptions of the chapters on the evolution and history of particular pieces or phases in furniture history, which, since they cover many periods, are equally in or out of order wherever inserted.

Catholicity of taste has been aimed at in the selection of the examples for the colour plates; with an equal breadth of outlook and sympathy of interpretation even when treating of periods towards which one suspects oneself temperamentally antagonistic.

An endeavour has been made to show each example with contemporary accessories and environment. When of equal beauty, preference has been given to less-known specimens, or those not previously illustrated in colour; though this has involved the elimination of deservedly favourite pieces, the result, it is believed, has been to add to the value and interest.

Loving labour has been expended upon the colour illustrations, in the hope of achieving the happy mean between an insistence upon detail, so exacting as to destroy the real appearance of the example, and an impressionist sketch expressing details so vaguely as to be void of informative value.

I have been led to compile the charts of styles and accessories

owing largely to the great difficulty experienced in obtaining promptly the information these charts embody. So far as I am aware, no attempt has been made hitherto to present such a mass of information upon decorative woodwork styles in systematised form, and, though the artistic temperament is usually in sympathy with the Chelsea Sage's ironic statement that "scarcely a fragment of man's body, soul, and possessions but has been probed and distilled," the value of this scaffolding of historic facts will, I venture to believe, be immediately recognised.

Traditions cluster round old woodwork, as round old buildings; but, granting that "the Golden Guess is Morning Star to the full round of Truth," its value to the would-be stater of facts is problematical. Romance and fact have their jocular habit of personating each other. To hold the balance between the lover of romance and the scientific appraiser of certainties is a task seldom performed to satisfaction; for to exclude everything unattested by affidavit of actual eye-witnesses were as faulty as to include every "fairy tale" or local legend, such as that attached to the seventeenth-century chair preserved in Lutterworth Church, Leicestershire, in which Wyclif is actually stated to have died—in 1384!

Neither can one imitate to advantage the frank dogmatism of the inscription upon another old chair, that ascribed to William Penn (the founder of Pennsylvania), and treasured by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

> I know not where, I know not when,
> But in this chair sat William Penn.

Whilst one cannot vouch the truth of every piece of alleged history, only such have been included as appear to the author's non-legal mind to present a strong *prima facie* case; the crucible of probability has, it is hoped, served us well.

Study of a subject so many-faceted as that of Decorative

Furniture should at least yield knowledge of ignorance upon that subject; no claim is therefore made to having explored every cranny or examined every flower in the prolific field. One realises also that words are too usually but the froth of thought, justified only by the hope of recondensation in the reader's mind into the essential mental elixir: a concluding aphorism to assist the continuance of Sir Joshua Reynolds' dislike of "talking artists."

EDWIN FOLEY

"No furniture so charming as Books," says Sydney Smith: if this Book but approach, in beauty and interest, the Furniture illustrated, it will have amply justified the aims of its projectors.

THE VISTA

THERE are two ways of knowing a piece of furniture. One, utilitarian, prosaic, superficial, and withal dreary, as a mere detail, tool, or item of existence—a table at which to eat, a chair to sit upon, "only this and nothing more." The other way is to know it as a whole, not only its purpose, but its evolution, history, and romance; the origin of this piece of ornament, the reason of that previously unconsidered shape, its beauties as well as its defects. The latter is the vitalising, interesting method, and my aim and hope will be to infuse its spirit into our book of furniture modes; by its aid we see that the furniture of bygone days often significantly mirrors the political, social, and ethical ideas of its time.

There are pieces of furniture so fine as to convey a sense of almost human personality. Some remind one of Haydn's simple melodies, some of the bravuras of the old Italian school, whilst the austere formal beauty of fugues or church music, seems to emanate from others.

How often in a room does one feel that some fine piece of old work stands solitary and disdainful of its modern companions; or, if the odds be with the old nobility of woodwork, that a coalition has been formed by them, to overawe an incongruous novelty of present-day woodwork thrust among them.

Every change in the forms of woodwork, from the crude stool of the semi-barbarian to the stately throne of a Lorenzo il Magnifico, from the rough dug-out trunk to the Boule *Coffret de Mariage*, has been dictated by some requirement of use or beauty.

Furniture, then, has its story for us. If we will but learn its language, and care to decipher its message, we may at least catch somewhat of the spirit which inspired Balzac when he gaily decorated the walls of his garret with charcoal inscriptions, "Rose-wood panelling and Commode" here, "Gobelins Tapestry and Venetian Mirror" there, and a "Picture by Raffaelle" in the place of honour over the fireless grate!

The story of the genesis and development of Decorative Furniture will be unfolded with sufficient fulness, aided by the diagram of British Woodwork Styles, the auxiliary chart of Accessories and Decoration, and the time-table of Architectural Periods, to make evident that, though decorative styles arise and sink like bubbles on the waters, each has its characteristic note and leaves some legacy to progress. The significance of the art relations between races, their cross-fertilisations, attractions, and repulsions will also be suggested, and an attempt be made to trace the manner in which national temperaments have expressed themselves in form and colour, so that in their furniture the Italians have usually been architectural and refined, the Spaniards grandiose, the French picturesque and colour-loving, the Dutch cumbrous and stolid, and the English, homely, useful, and varied; whilst the rugged virility of the German, until tamed by professor and drill sergeant, has been as noticeable as the manner in which the stereotyped habit of thought induced by the ancestor-worship of the Celestial, has stamped itself on his household appointments.

The Book of Decorative Furniture aims in particular at depicting the essential characteristics of:—

1. British Domestic Woodwork, from the period of the introduction of the printing-press into England and the building up of the

English home-life, to the commencement of the nineteenth century. It embraces, therefore, the woodwork eras of Oak, Walnut, and Mahogany, the late Gothic, Tudor, Stuart, Queen Anne, William and Mary, and Georgian periods, giving due prominence to the productions of the great eighteenth-century designers, Chippendale, Adam, Hepplewhite, Sheraton, and their contemporaries. Many of the examples are chosen from collections of colonial furniture in America.

2. French Woodwork, of the same period, with special preference to the masterpieces of the famous *ebenistes* and *ciseleurs*, who produced the sumptuous modes of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

3. Italian, Flemish, German, Spanish, and Oriental Interior Woodwork.

CONTENTS

PAGE

PREFACE i

THE VISTA v

CHART OF BRITISH WOODWORK STYLES WITH FRENCH AND OTHER CONTINENTAL CORRELATIONS.

DECORATIVE FURNITURE FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO 1475 1
- Prehistoric 1
- Egypt, Babylon, and Assyria . . 5
- Egyptian Decorative Woodwork . 5
- Babylonian and Assyrian Furniture. 8
- Assyrian Tables and Couches . . 9
- Hebrew Woodworkers . . . 10
- Grecian Art in Woodwork . . 14
- Etruscan and Roman Furniture . 16
- Byzantine and Romanesque . . 21
- Asiatic Arts 24

DECORATIVE FURNITURE IN BRITAIN PRIOR TO 1475 . . 25
- Roman 25
- Saxon and Norman 26
- Saxon Homes and Furniture . . 29
- The Gothic Styles 34
- Our Colour-Loving Ancestors . . 37
- Close of the Middle Ages . . 37

A TIME-TABLE OF ARCHITECTURAL STYLES 41

THE LATE GOTHIC PERIOD IN BRITISH DECORATIVE FURNITURE, 1475–1509 . . . 42
- Politics affecting Furniture . . 42
- Mediæval and Tudor Woodworkers . 43
- The Guild of Tapisers . . . 43
- Church Influence upon Decorative Furniture 44
- Old Manuscript Illustrations . . 47
- The Gothic Woodworker's Kit. . 48
- Linenfold and Parchemin Patterns . 48

PAGE
- The Tudor Rose 49
- "Romayne" Work and Gothic . . 49
- The Mediæval Hall. 50
- Trestle Tables. 51
- The Table Dormant 52
- Cupboards, Credences, and Almeries. 52
- Chairs, Stools, and Benches . . 59
- Chests and Coffers 60
- Woods 61
- Late Gothic—Conclusion . . . 61

THE TUDOR-RENAISSANCE PERIOD IN BRITISH DECORATIVE FURNITURE, 1509–1603 . . 63
- The Renaissance in England . . 64
- Henry the Eighth and the Renaissance 65
- Italian Designers in England . . 65
- Elizabethan "Architects" . . 66
- The Renaissance Screen and Choir Stalls at Cambridge . . . 66
- Nonesuch Chests 69
- Edward the Sixth and Mary . . 70
- A Tudor Inventory 71
- Elizabeth 71
- Foreign Influence on Elizabethan Woodwork 73
- Panelling and Tapestry . . . 77
- The Tapiser and Upholder . . 78
- Internal Porches 79
- Tudor-Renaissance Details . . 80
- Romayne Work 81
- Elizabethan Grotesques . . . 81
- Inlaid Work 82
- Tudor Jokers in Wood . . . 82
- Old English Woodwork of the Oak Period 86
- Coffers and Cupboards . . . 89
- Flanders Chests 93
- The Hustilement of the Great Hall 97
- Tudor Bedsteads 100
- Tudor Chairs 102
- "Riving" 105

PAGE

THE TUDOR RENAISSANCE, ETC.—*continued*
WAINSCOTING 106
METHODS OF TUDOR CRAFTSMEN . . 107
POLISHING 107
THE METAL WORKER 107
WOODS AND FORESTS 108
TUDOR HOUSES 109

CONTINENTAL CONTEMPORARIES OF THE LATE GOTHIC AND TUDOR PERIODS.

THE RENAISSANCE IN ITALY TO 1603 113
THE PASSING OF THE GOTHIC . . 115
THE CINQUECENTO IN DECORATIVE WOODWORK 116
FLORENCE THE FONT 118
THE RIVAL CITIES 121
THE CITY OF PEARL AND GOLD . . 121
FIREPLACES 122
SEIGNEURIAL SEATS 123
RENAISSANCE TABLES 123
CABINETS 124
CASSONI 124
FRAMES 125
BEDS 126
BELLOWS 126
THE STIMULUS OF THE RENAISSANCE . 129

THE RENAISSANCE IN FRANCE TO 1589 137
CHARLES THE EIGHTH 138
FRANCIS THE FIRST 139
THE LOIRE CHÂTEAUX . . . 139
BENVENUTO CELLINI 140
HENRI DEUX 141
SCHOOLS OF DECORATIVE FURNITURE . 142
EARLY FRENCH DECORATIVE FURNITURE 145
HUCHES AND HUCHIERS 146
THE CHAIR 147
THE SELLETTE, OR ESCABEAU . . 148
BEDSTEADS 149
FIREPLACES 149
TABLES 150
WOODS 150
PAINTING AND GILDING . . . 153

THE RENAISSANCE IN SPAIN AND PORTUGAL TO 1603 . 157
MOORISH INFLUENCE 157
THE HAPSBURGS 161
PLATERESQUE RENAISSANCE . . . 162
CHESTS 163
BEDS 163
VARGUEÑO CABINETS 164

PAGE

CHAIRS 164
IMPERIAL TOLEDO 165
PIETRO TORRIGIANO 166
GUADAMECILES 166
PHILIP THE SECOND 169

THE RENAISSANCE IN THE NETHERLANDS AND GERMANY TO 1603 171
IN BURGUNDY 171
THE NETHERLANDS 172
IN GERMANY 174
ALBERT DÜRER 174
HANS HOLBEIN 177
GERMAN BOOKS OF DESIGN . . . 178

A CHAPTER ON THE CHAIR . . 183
THE BUDSTICK 184
SEATS ORIENTAL 184
HERBERT SPENCER ON CHAIR-COMFORT . 185

A FAMILY TREE FOR THE TREEN FAMILY.

THE STUART PERIOD OF BRITISH DECORATIVE WOODWORK, 1603–1688 191
STUART FURNITURE DIVISIONS . . 192
THE STUARTS 193
JAMES THE FIRST 194
INIGO JONES 195
CHARLES THE FIRST 196
COMMONWEALTH 197
"THE MERRY MONARCH" . . . 198
INDO-PORTUGUESE FURNITURE . . 201
GRINLING GIBBON 202
EVELYN AND GRINLING GIBBON . . 202
SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN . . . 204
GREAT FIRE OF LONDON . . . 204
SILVER FURNITURE 205
JAMES II. 206
THE FRENCH IMMIGRATION . . . 207
THE BAROCCO INFLUENCE ON ENGLISH CHAIR WORK 207
WOODS 207
AGE OF WALNUT 208
STUART UPHOLSTERY 211
ALLWOOD CHAIRS 212
DAY-BEDS 215
SETTLES AND COUCHES 216
LOVE SEATS 216
STOOLS AND TABOURETS 216
BEDS 217
FIREPLACES 218
STUART TABLES 221

PAGE

THE STUART PERIOD, ETC.—*continued*
"GATE-LEG" TABLES 222
"THOUSAND-LEGGED" TABLES . . 222
TEA AND COFFEE TABLES . . . 223
CUPBOARDS 224
DRESSERS 226
CHESTS 226
STUART DECORATIVE DETAILS . . 228
INLAYING 235
"OYSTERING" 236
"THE INDIAN TASTE" . . . 236

THE LATER RENAISSANCE IN FRANCE, 1589–1643 . . . 239
HENRI IV. AND LOUIS XIII. . . . 241
THE BED 247
UPHOLSTERY 247

FIRST CHAPTER ON COLONIAL FURNITURE IN AMERICA, 1607–1783 253
SOME RELEVANT DATES IN COLONIAL FURNITURE HISTORY . . . 254
THE EARLY ENGLISH SETTLEMENTS IN VIRGINIA AND NEW ENGLAND . . 255
EARLY SOUTHERN SETTLEMENTS . . 256
THE "MAYFLOWER" AND NEW ENGLAND 256
MARYLAND. 257
PENNSYLVANIA 257
HOUSES IN EARLY NEW ENGLAND . 258
FRENCH AND SPANISH SETTLEMENTS . 258
THE DUTCH SETTLEMENTS UPON THE HUDSON—NEW AMSTERDAM (1613–1664), NEW YORK (1664–1776) . 259
THE WEST INDIA COMPANY . . 260
CAPTAIN KIDD 264
CHESTS 265
OLD ENGLISH COURT CUPBOARDS . . 266
SETTLES AND BENCHES . . . 269
SEATS 270
CHAIRS 271

LATE AND ZOPF RENAISSANCE IN GERMANY FROM 1603 . . 277

SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE DECORATIVE FURNITURE FROM 1603 285

ITALIAN DECORATIVE FURNITURE FROM 1603 289

DECORATIVE FURNITURE OF THE NETHERLANDS — HOLLAND AND FLANDERS, FROM 1603 . 295

PAGE

LAC. ORIENTAL AND EUROPEAN . . 297
CRISPIN VAN DEN PASSE . . . 299

THE LOUIS XIV. PERIOD OF FRENCH DECORATIVE FURNITURE 1643–1715 305
VERSAILLES 306
THE ROYAL WORKSHOPS . . . 308
BERNINI 311
COLBERT 311
LE BRUN 311
THE LE PAUTRES AND BERAIN . . 312
ELEMENTS OF THE STYLE . . 312
LA CHINOISERIE 313
BOULLE 314
„ LE PERE 314
EBONY AND TORTOISESHELL . . . 315
BOULLE FURNITURE PRICES . . . 317
WOOD INLAYS 318
BEDS 319
LOUIS XIV.'S STATE BEDROOM . . 320
AUDIENCES IN BED 320
OTHER FURNITURE 323
TORCHÈRES 324
MIRRORS 325
THE GALERIE DES GLACES . . . 325
LE ROI SOLEIL 326
THE STYLE 327
THE JONES AND WALLACE COLLECTIONS 328

BRITISH HOMES OF OTHER DAYS . 333
THE HOUSE, THE HALL, AND THE HEARTH 333
THE NORMAN KEEP . . 334
"THE MARSH" 335
MOBILE HOUSEHOLD GODS . . . 336
THE WARS OF THE ROSES . . . 337
THE ELIZABETHAN MANOR HOUSE . 337
THE GREAT HALL 338
THE HEARTH 339
THE "INGLENEUK" 341
THE CURFEW 342
COAL VERSUS WOOD 343
HEARTH TAX 344
THE ENGLISH DINING-ROOM. . . 344

FINDS, FRAUDS, FACTS, AND FANCIES IN OLD FURNITURE: A CHAPTER ON COLLECTING . 349
THE COLLECTING PROCLIVITY . . 350
COLLECTING BY DEPUTY . . . 350
COLLECTING PERSONALLY . . . 351
THE "KNOCK OUT" 352
A COLLECTOR'S HOME 352
PATINA 353

PAGE

FINDS, FRAUDS, FACTS, ETC.—*continued*
- RESTORING 354
- CIRCULAR SAWS IN 1710! . . . 354
- WOODEN ANACHRONISMS . . . 357
- FINDS 357
- SECRET DRAWERS 359
- FRAUDS 361
- ENHANCING THE VALUE . . . 361
- CARVING UP 361
- INLAYING AND VENEERING . . . 362
- IMITATING ADAM, HEPPLEWHITE, AND SHERATON 362
- PAINTING 362
- PSEUDO PEDIGREE . . . 362
- WILES OF THE "FAKER" . . . 363
- THE WORM-EATER 364
- IMITATING OLD CARVED OAK 365
- TOOLS OF THE OLD CRAFTSMEN . . 365
- SOME NOTABLE SALE PRICES . 366

THE WILLIAM AND ANNE PERIOD IN BRITISH DECORATIVE FURNITURE, 1688–1727 . . 371
- DUTCH DOMINANCE IN DESIGN . 373
- GRINLING GIBBON . . . 375
- SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN . 376
- CRAFTSMEN 380
- WOODS 381
- INLAYING OR MARQUETERIE . . . 382
- CHARACTERISTIC DETAILS . . 403
- THE CABRIOLE 406
- TURNINGS 407
- MOULDINGS 408
- PANELLING 408
- WALL DECORATIONS 411
- HANDLES 411

PAGE
- LACQUER 411
- CHAIRS 414
- WILLIAM AND ANNE SETTEES . . 417
- UPHOLSTERY—DAY-BEDS . . . 417
- DRAUGHT CHAIR 418
- THE SOFA 418
- CHESTS OF DRAWERS 421
- CABINETS 423
- CORNER CUPBOARDS 423
- BEDS 423
- MIRRORS 424
- TABLES 424
- HIGH-CASE CLOCKS 425
- SUMMARY 426

MODES OF ORNAMENT IN DECORATIVE FURNITURE . . . 387
- RELIEF AND FLAT ORNAMENT . . 388
- RELIEF ORNAMENT 388
- FLAT ORNAMENT 389
- CARVING 390
- REPRODUCTIONS BY MECHANICAL PROCESSES OF CARVING AND MODELLING . 392
- CONSTRUCTIONAL FORMS . . . 392
- TURNINGS, MOULDINGS, AND OTHER SOFTENINGS OF CONSTRUCTIONAL FORM 393
- INLAYING 393
- THE ACANTHUS 397
- VENEERING 398
- INLAYING IN OTHER MATERIALS . . 398
- CERTOSINA 401
- PAINTING 401
- LACQUER 402
- COMBINED RELIEF AND FLAT PROCESSES 403
- POKERWORK 403

LIST OF PLATES

PLATE		PAGE
I.	CHARACTERISTIC COLOURINGS AND GRAIN MARKINGS OF PRINCIPAL CONSTRUCTIONAL AND DECORATIVE WOODS USED IN EARLY TIMES	3
II.	FOURTEENTH-CENTURY BUTTRESSED COFFER	11
III.	MARRIAGE COFFER OR CASSONE. ITALIAN	19
IV.	LATE GOTHIC SCHRANK. GERMAN	27
V.	OAK DOUBLE HUTCH	31
VI.	CARVED OAK DRESSOIR—LOUIS XII.	35
VII.	INLAID MUNIMENT CHEST	45
VIII.	THE "KING'S ROOM," OXBURGH HALL	53
IX.	OAK PRESS, STRANGERS' HALL, NORWICH	57
X.	THE PANELLED STUDY AT GROOMBRIDGE PLACE	67
XI.	THE LITTLECOTE BEDSTEAD	75
XII.	CARVED AND INLAID OAK COURT CUPBOARD	83
XIII.	INLAID NONESUCH CHEST	95
	CARVED "DRAWINGE" TABLE, SHIBDEN HALL	95
	CARVED CHIMNEYPIECE AT CHIDDENSTONE	95
	EARLIEST ENGLISH WALL-PAPER, AT BORDEN HALL	95
XIV.	OAK TRESTLE TABLE	103
	"MINE HOSTS" CHAIR	103
XV.	UPHOLSTERED CHAIR AND COUCH WITH ADJUSTABLE ENDS	111
XVI.	CARVED OAK ARMOIRE, BEARING THE CIPHER OF LAMBERT SUAVIUS OF LIÉGE. CARVED OAK TABLE	119
XVII.	PETITE CREDENCE, FRANÇOIS I.	127

LIST OF PLATES

PLATE		PAGE
XVIII.	HENRI DEUX CARVED BAHUT	131
	OAK SCREEN OF THE SAME FRENCH PERIOD	131
XIX.	CARVED BOURGOUIGNON CREDENCE	143
XX.	OAK CABINET, WITH CIRCULAR CONVEX PANELS, INCISED ARABESQUE ORNAMENT	151
	WALNUT CHAIR, WITH INTERLACED ORNAMENT	151
XXI.	VARGUEÑO CABINET OF CHESTNUT, IVORY, ETC., PAINTED AND GILT WITH WROUGHT-IRON AND STEEL MOUNTS: UPON TWISTED, TURNED, AND CARVED STAND	159
XXII.	CARVED OAK BEDSTEAD OF JEANNE D'ALBRET	167
XXIII.	WROUGHT STEEL CHAIR	175
XXIV.	GROUP OF LATE SIXTEENTH-CENTURY CONTINENTAL FURNITURE: PORTUGUESE CABINET OF CHESTNUT, INLAID WITH IVORY, EBONY, AND COLOURED WOODS, SPIRAL TURNED ARM-CHAIR	181
XXV.	SOME CONSTRUCTIONAL AND DECORATIVE WOODS IN VOGUE DURING THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY	189
XXVI.	SHOVELBOARD TABLE IN THE HALL OF LITTLECOTE	199
XXVII.	COURT CUPBOARD BUFFET	209
XXVIII.	CARVED OAKEN STAIRWAY, GODINTON	219
XXIX.	OAK WELSH DRESSER	229
XXX.	CHIMNEYPIECE IN THE DOUBLE CUBE ROOM, WILTON HOUSE	233
XXXI.	A CABINET OF OAK AND WALNUT, WITH EBONY PANELS AND COLUMNS, INLAID WITH ROSEWOOD AND IVORY ENGRAVED	243
XXXII.	THE PUTNAM CUPBOARD OF ENGLISH OAK AND CEDAR	251
	CARVED SETTLE OF AMERICAN OAK	251
XXXIII.	WALNUT KAS INLAID AND WITH PAINTED MEDALLIONS OF DELFT WARE	261
XXXIV.	AN EARLY VIRGINIAN COLONIST'S PARLOUR	267
XXXV.	THE "RUBENS" CABINET, WINDSOR CASTLE — OF EBONY CARVED. INTERIOR FITTINGS INLAID AND COLUMNS OF TORTOISESHELL	275
XXXVI.	MIRROR, GUERIDONS, AND TABLE OVERLAID WITH SILVER PLAQUES	283

PLATE		PAGE
XXXVII.	CHIMNEYPIECE IN COLOURED MOSAIC. FLORENTINE	293
	TABLE IN COLOURED MOSAIC. FLORENTINE	293
XXXVIII.	CARVED WALNUT BOMBÉ ARMOIRE WITH CHASED MOUNTS	303
XXXIX.	INLAID JEWEL CASKET OF WALNUT WOOD. PANELLED FRONT, SIDES, AND TOP	309
XL.	COFFRET DE MARIAGE BOULLE	321
XLI.	ARMOIRE IN EBONY WITH INLAYS OF ENGRAVED BRASS AND WHITE METAL. CHASED ORMOLU MOUNTINGS. THE ROYAL MONOGRAM OF L'S REVERSED WITHIN THE TURQUOISE BLUE OVAL MEDALLIONS. BOULLE. DESIGNED BY JEAN BERAIN	331
XLII.	KNEEHOLE WRITING TABLE IN RED TORTOISESHELL AND LACQUER STEEL TOP. BOULLE	345
	GILT FAUTEUILS, UPHOLSTERED IN TAPESTRY	345
XLIII.	PANELLING, WITH GRINLING GIBBON CARVINGS	355
	MIRROR FRAME, „ „ „	355
	WALNUT TABLE, WILLIAM AND MARY	355
	WALNUT CHAIR, „ „	355
	CHARLES WESLEY'S WALNUT HIGH-CASE CLOCK	355
XLIV.	CARVED WALNUT DARBY AND JOAN SETTEE	369
XLV.	INLAID WALNUT BOMBÉ BUREAU-CABINET	377
XLVI.	QUEEN ANNE'S BED	385
	CHEST OF DRAWERS UPON STAND	385
	WOODEN CANDELABRA	385
XLVII.	WALNUT INLAID WRITING-TABLE	395
XLVIII.	RED AND GILT LACQUER DOUBLE CHEST OF DRAWERS	399
XLIX.	BLACK LACQUER SETTEE, CHAIRS AND TABLE, RED LACQUER MIRROR	409
	WALL-PAPER AT WOTTON-UNDER-EDGE	409
L.	A GROUP OF EARLY EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY FURNITURE	419
	WALNUT CABINET-TOP SCRUTOIRE	419
	INLAID SYCAMORE ("YELLOW") CLOCK	419
	CARVED TABOURET	419

DECORATIVE FURNITURE FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO 1475

PREHISTORIC

MOTHER Earth originally sufficed for bed, chair, table, and sideboard; only after man had reached a stage in which his faculties were not exclusively required for self-preservation in its crudest aspect, when "Nature red in tooth and claw" no longer obsessed him, could the idea of making articles for his service and pleasure have occurred to him.

To what extent man derives his liking for wood from the arboreal habits of his alleged ancestors it is outside the sufficiently wide field of Decorative Furniture to inquire; but that, from the remotest ages to the present day, of all the materials applicable to the interior construction and adornment of the home, wood has been his first favourite and proven friend, admits of little doubt. Its study is consequently interwoven with that of the habits and beliefs of the past in a fascinating chapter of human history. Commencing with some unboasted of, though pre-Norman, forefather of ours, Carlyle's polysyllabic friend, the aboriginal anthropophagus, who, in the leisured ease of his cavern, first made rough incisions on club or stick to record his "bag," we may assume that the first artist was a carver, and that the birth of the technical, the mathematical, and the artistic faculties were due to the one impulse. Gradually becoming interested in his work as the tally became longer and

the rudiments of order unfolded, our prehistoric ancestor arranged his notches in parallel lines. Next, as the sense of balance awoke, he placed his incisions diagonally and opposite to one another; from the straight to the curve was an easy transition, and so step by step the elements of order and design were awakened within his mind and made visible. If this surmise be accurate, the first craftsman was a woodworker, and the seats, tables, and receptacles first constructed were dug, carved, or burnt out of the solid log, after the fashion of the canoes of primitive races. The crude pieces of furniture thus made were the forerunners of the innumerable assemblage of articles which man has since constructed for his use in the home.

It would be too fanciful to pursue this theory of the prehistoric stages of the woodworker's art through the ages which intervene until the civilisations of Egypt, Babylon, and Assyria dimly loom upon the horizon of history, at a period at least 4700 years before Christ.

More than average imagination is required to project oneself sympathetically into the life of an alien people at so remote a period; and to allow not only for the differences caused by modes of religious and other government, but for the equally powerful influence of temperature upon temperament. There is consequently some difficulty, increasing the more one travels eastward, in understanding and appreciating the fittings of the homes of the ancient world.

CARVED BOX FROM THE SOLOMON ISLANDS.

PLATE I

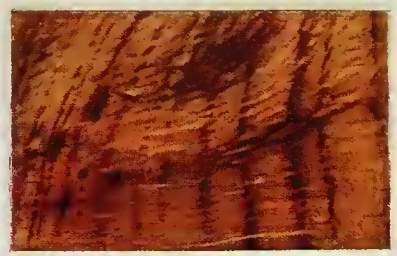
THE series of colour plates, showing the characteristic grain markings of thirty-six varieties of constructional and decorative woods, has been photographed from the actual woods, without manipulation or exaggeration of the distinctive features of the grain.

The plates over-leaf show the principal woods used in early times: succeeding plates in Part V. show woods used for inlaying, etc., during the Stuart period mainly; in Part XII., some of the woods more especially in vogue during the eighteenth century; and in Part XVI., some richly marked woods now at the disposal of the furniture designer. These plates manifest the versatility of Nature's own designs in fibres; and how little, after all, man has yet availed himself of her resources.

In Parts XV. and XVI. will be found a Chapter on Woods, and a Chart tabulating the principal characteristics of thirty of the principal trees used in the production of decorative furniture.

The few surviving examples of furniture used in the home prior to the fourteenth century are either too fragmentary in condition, too unimportant in character, or not sufficiently decorative, to justify inclusion in this series of one hundred colour plates, each of which has been taken from an actually existing piece. Equal care has been taken to ensure accuracy in the contemporary accessories shown upon each plate.

WAINSCOT OAK: NATURAL COLOUR

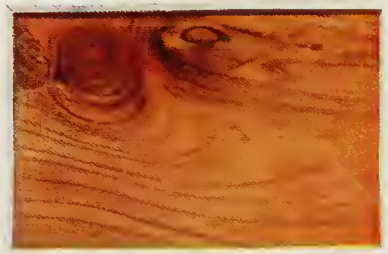


BROWN OAK

WAINSCOT OAK: DARKENED BY AGE

CEDAR

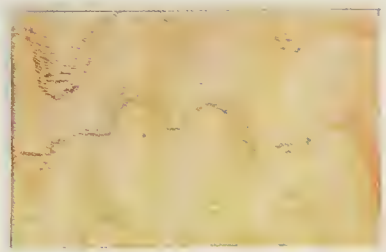
BOG OAK



YEW.

CHESTNUT

ELM



ASH

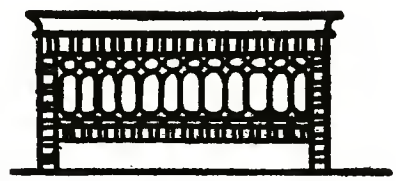
EGYPT, BABYLON, AND ASSYRIA

RÉNAN'S description of Egypt—

LEG OF SEAT IN CARVED WOOD. ANCIENT EGYPTIAN.

> The Queen of Nations and the Boast of Time,
> Mother of Sciences and the House of Gods,

as "a kind of lighthouse in the dark night of profound antiquity," appears especially apt when tracing the history of furniture ere Europe had emerged from savagery. Whilst the very name of Greece was unknown, the sun-baked fertile valley annually bathed by the Nile was peopled by communities, not only able to raise time-defying Sphinx and Pyramids, but also to express, in solid form and vivid colour, their native force, severity, and dignity in the furniture of the homes of their upper classes.

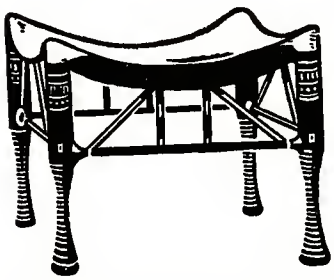


ANCIENT EGYPTIAN TABLE.

EGYPTIAN DECORATIVE WOODWORK

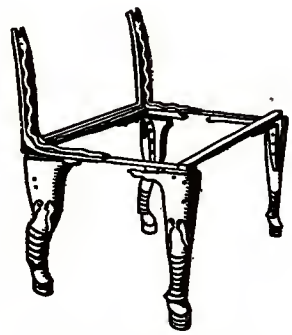
The climate of the land of the Pharaohs is so dry that a feminine wig some six thousand years old was discovered at Thebes, within the last century, little the worse for time. The absence of humidity, coupled with the faith of the people in the persistence

of personality after death, and the return of the spirit to the body (which led to burying models or actual pieces of furniture with the body), has preserved more records and specimens of this, the oldest civilisation, than we possess of others many centuries later.



INLAID STOOL. ANCIENT EGYPTIAN.

The throne of the Egyptian Queen Hatshepsu, in the British Museum, is probably the most ancient piece of furniture in the world.



REMAINS OF QUEEN HATSHEPSU'S THRONE.

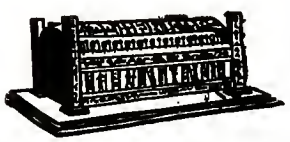
Bas-reliefs, papyri, and mural paintings almost invariably include representations of stools and couches, which, although shown in elevation, enable us to reconstruct the design.

The woodworking tools, which were placed among other votive offerings of implements in the foundations of Babylonian temples, that the spirits resident therein might actively assist the craftsmen, afford further insight into the methods and appliances of Egyptian carving and other crafts. Folding stools, chairs, and couches having seats of leather, plaited rushes or linen cord (upon which at times were thrown cushions or the skins of panthers and other wild animals), footstools, flower-stands, tables and cabinets, cushions of woven cloth and mattresses, are all evidences that the homes of Egypt and Nineveh possessed more than the rudiments of material comfort and refinement, even when judged by the standard of to-day. The craftsman of Egypt stamped his stern, positive personality on all he touched. He possessed knowledge of carving, turning, painting, inlaying, veneering, and canework. Upon the solid wood blocks, scarcely a foot high, which formed his bench he

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN STOOL.

STAND OF PAINTED WOOD. ANCIENT EGYPTIAN.

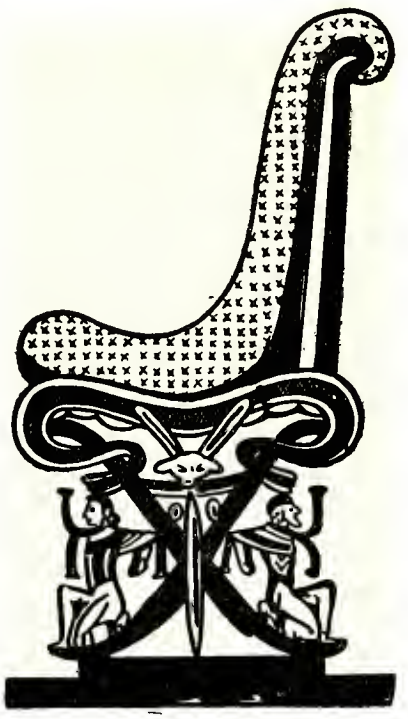
fashioned works in ebony, ivory, cedar, acacia (*sont*) or sycamore, enriched with precious stones, gold, silver, or baser metals, and carved with the symbols of his race; the legs of his pieces ending usually with lions' paws or the hoofs of bulls.



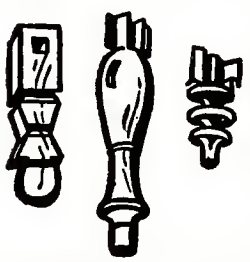
PAINTED WOODEN SARCOPHAGUS. ANCIENT EGYPTIAN.

Egyptian woodwork, as well as Egyptian sculpture, appears to have been painted in colours which, to our grey-attuned eyesight, seem garish and wanting in subtlety.

The wooden mummy cases, and sarcophagi generally, if we may include, as the Egyptians undoubtedly did, such coffers among decorative furniture, were often elaborately decorated, both inside and out, with figure subjects, the lotus flower, and other more or less appropriate ornament, including hieroglyphic inscriptions from the Book of the Dead, painted in red and yellow, black, brown, blue, and green. Red ochre was used to express the swarthy complexions of the men, yellow ochre for the women or fair-skinned foreigners. The little carved wooden figures of minister-



AN EGYPTIAN THRONE, SUPPORTED BY FIGURES OF CAPTIVES.



FRAGMENTS OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN FURNITURE.

ing slaves (called *ushabitiu* or answerers, which were also interred with the dead, that they might save him labour in his happier future life) were often of painted wood, as also the delicate spoons for perfumes, and the long rectangular scribes' palettes with spaces sunk for pigments.

CARVING ON PORTABLE THRONE. ANCIENT EGYPTIAN.

Curious and interesting too, as examples of the woodworker's craft,

are the painted mechanical toys, such as crocodiles with movable jaws, and dolls, wooden also, with pellets of clay, strung upon thread to imitate hair: showing us that even the stern Egyptian unbent at home.

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN MIRROR OF POLISHED METAL. DISCOVERED AT THEBES.

The mirrors of ancient Egypt must have been of very highly polished metal, since one found at Thebes can, even now, be rubbed sufficiently to reflect. The Egyptian women always carried a metal mirror with them to their temples—a practice followed by their Israelitish sisters, judging from the passage in the Book of Exodus in which Bezaleel "made the laver of brass, and the foot of it of brass, of the looking-glasses of the women assembling, which assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation." In the Biblical passages referring to mirrors the word *esoptron* is used, by which the Greeks invariably meant a mirror of polished metal, not of glass.

BOTTLE IN THE FORM OF A COLUMN.

BABYLONIAN AND ASSYRIAN FURNITURE

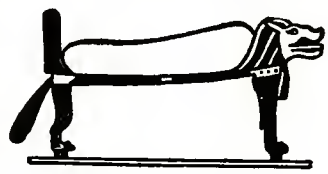
ANCIENT EGYPTIAN THRONE WITH LOTUS ORNAMENT. ARMS FORMED BY WINGS OF SACRED HAWK.

The climate and creeds of Babylon not being so favourable as those of Egypt, no complete example has been discovered of either Babylonian furniture, or of that used by their "conquerors in arms and docile pupils in arts," the Assyrians. Sculptures enable us, however, to picture accurately the forms of furniture in vogue among both races, since it is a reasonable inference that the Assyrians adopted the Babylonian

furniture, in much the same way as the Romans adopted that of the Greeks whom they subdued.

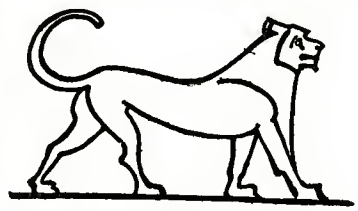
The statue of Gudea, King of Babylon, some 2500 years B.C., shows that monarch seated on a throne or chair. One would feel more grateful to the sculptor if he had given some indication of the manner in which the framing was put together. The design appears less suitable for wood than bronze; a material, judging from portions still existing of a bronze throne, the Babylonians were extremely expert in working.

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN STOOL.



ANCIENT EGYPTIAN SEAT.

The legs of Babylonian and Assyrian furniture terminated usually in similar fashion to Egyptian, *i.e.* in lions' paws or bulls' hoofs, but the Assyrians also used square legs with a base of large inverted pine-cones. The designs of later Assyrian work show that the Assyrian race were unable to add accordant elements to the art of the conquered Babylonians.



CARVING ON END OF EGYPTIAN PORTABLE THRONE.

Under Assyrian rule a more massive framework was adopted for furniture. Monuments and rock tablets show at times, in common with Egyptian records, thrones curiously supported not only by lions, but by human figures, presumably intended to represent prisoners.

ASSYRIAN TABLES AND COUCHES

Tables and couches appear to have been practically identical in design with the seats, and, like the seats, to have favoured lions' heads when terminals to arms were required.

An extremely complete representation of Assyrian furniture is shown on a sculptured slab, representing a king feasting with his queen in the palace gardens. The queen is seated upon a throne so high

as to require a footstool. His majesty rests on a couch, the head end of which is curved forward and forms a species of arm-rest. The legs and rails of the couch are square, and the feet (of the inverted cone-shape) are ornamented with human figures and lions, as well as moulded and scrolled. Between their majesties is shown a high table, upon which the fare for the feast is displayed, whilst by the king's side is a small lower table on which his bow, quiver, and sword are placed. These pieces of royal furniture were probably made of cedar, though ebony, teak, and walnut were also imported and used in conjunction with ivory and the precious metals for inlays.

ANCIENT ASSYRIAN COUCH, TABLES, AND CHAIRS. SCULPTURED SLAB REPRESENTING KING AND QUEEN FEASTING IN GARDEN.

Though scarcely relevant, it is interesting to note that wooden instruments of three unequal facets were used in picture writing to produce the wedge-shaped strokes of cuneiform writing, which they found quicker and neater to employ than rounded forms, whether inscribing upon the wet clay tablets the innumerable contracts, hymns, and omens, or immortalising on bricks, with reiteration's artless aid, the names, titles, and glories of their rulers.

BABILI (BABYLON) IN CUNEIFORM CHARACTERS. FROM INSCRIPTION ON THE BRICKS INSCRIBED WITH NAME AND TITLE OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR II.

The Babylonians and Assyrians had an even greater fondness for clay as a constructive material than had the Egyptian taskmasters of the Hebrews. The compulsory training which the

HEBREW WOODWORKERS

underwent in Egypt probably taught them as much wood-working craft as they required to build the tabernacle, under the supervision

PLATE II

FOURTEENTH-CENTURY BUTTRESSED COFFERS

At Faversham, Rainham, and S. John's Hospital, Canterbury

Length, 5 ft. 3 in.; height, 3 ft.; depth, 2 ft. 3 in.

Throughout the fascinating sequence of periods during which the English domestic hearth was gathering the sanctities, comforts, and privileges embodied in the word Home, the dug-out trunk, chest, or coffer was its chief and most valued article of furniture; serving as bedstead and table, as well as for the safe storage of valuables.

Facts and legends galore cluster round the coffer. In comparatively modern days, that lugubriously associated with the "oak chest that had long lain hid," and recounted vocally at each Christmas; in more far-off times, the coffer preserved at Burgos which the valiant Cid filled with sand, and deposited as security for a loan by a Jew,—a feat recalling a confidence trickster rather than a hero of romance. Among the interesting stories of the ancient days of Grecian prosperity, is that of the famous carved and inlaid cedar chest, wherein Cypselos of Corinth lay successfully concealed, when his mother's relations sought to murder him, as the most efficient method of preventing the fulfilment of the Delphic Oracle's forecast that he would live to work the ruin of their ruling party. He proved the accuracy of the prophecy, ultimately ruling Corinth for thirty years.

Few ancient examples of pre-Gothic times exist in Britain. Our

moist climate is probably more destructive to woodwork in a century than that of Egypt in twenty times that period.

In the old MS. miniature sketches the coffer is almost invariably represented in bright colours; sufficient traces yet remain of the colouring of the Faversham chest to permit of a colour representation of its probable original appearance. The fronts of such coffers, although buttressed, are not framed, but constructed of planks running lengthways upon which the buttresses are fixed, helping to fasten the structure together, by performing the functions of the iron strapwork and ornamented hinges of earlier examples.

It is regrettable that the valuable Faversham relic should recently have been cruelly "restored," by its front and top only being retained, and fixed upon a cheap deal box.

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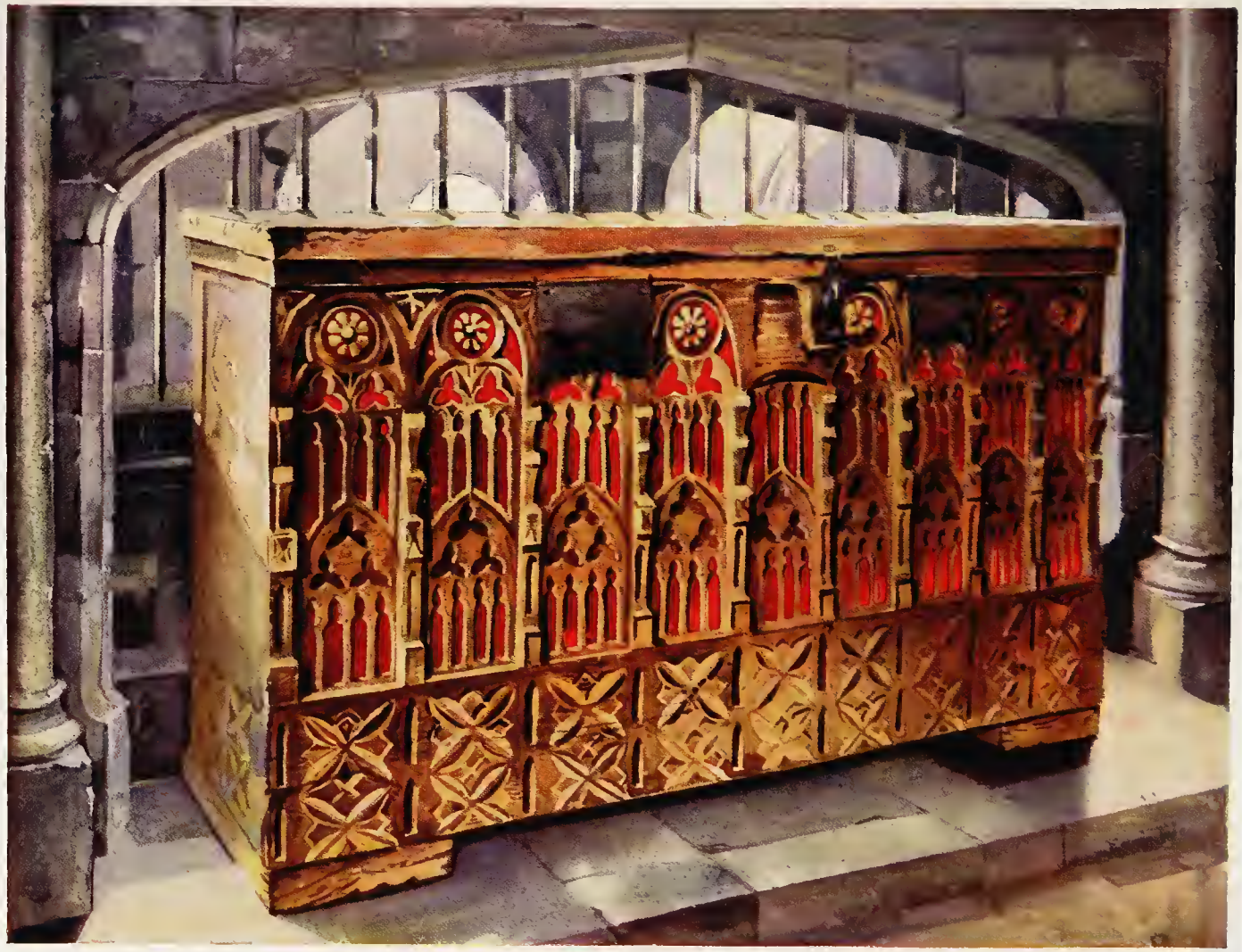


PLATE III

MARRIAGE COFFER OR CASSONE

In the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington. Italian (Florentine probably). *Circa* 1550. Length, 6 ft. 7 in.; height, 3 ft. 1½ in.; depth, 2 ft. 4 in.

Carved, gilt, and painted: in front with the Triumphs of Love, Chastity, and Death; and on the sides with Pyramus and Thisbe and Narcissus

When Gremio, in the *Taming of the Shrew*, says—

> In ivory coffers I have stuffed my crowns,
> In cypress chests my arras counterpoints,
> Costly apparel, . . .

he was but voicing the custom of the period. Until the wardrobe and the chest of drawers appeared, the coffer was the recognised piece of furniture for storage; the marriage coffer naturally, from its associations, being most treasured among the *lares* and *penates* of the housewife. In Holland, and other Continental countries where the bridal coffer is still retained, the zealous collector who desires to preserve peaceful relations with the goodwife, will do well to avoid offering to purchase her marriage or dower chest, for there is no surer way of affronting her. Cypress wood, of which Gremio's chest was made, was considered to particularly protect wearing apparel and other textiles against moths.

The *cassone* gives striking evidence of the advanced state of Renaissance decorative furniture in Italy, at a period when the rest of the Continent was either frankly Gothic, or crudely grafting fragments of Renaissance detail upon the mediæval forms.

A characteristic of the Italian coffer is that it was usually gilt and painted, upon its long front panel, with pageants or allegories such as that shown on this example. One doubts if the modern bride would be grateful if presented with a chest, however beautiful, showing a funeral car bearing Death with his scythe standing astride two coffins: the oxen yoked to the car are almost as "fabulous" as the two unicorns drawing the central car of Chastity (or Peace?), to which Cupid is ignominiously bound.

A collection of wedding chests would be an epitome of decorative furniture; for men have in all periods of its use felt especial pleasure in placing their finest craftsmanship upon the bridal chest.

BEDS AND COUCHES (general term, *Lectus*). — Early forms identical with those of Greece; then varieties (usually entered from one side only) with foot-boards and sometimes head-boards. Later forms with step for entry. Pillow rest at head.

The couch used at meals (*Lectus tricliniaris*) lower than bed, with ledge at head upon which the left arm rested. Later *Accubita* were still lower. Small couches were also used when writing.

SIDEBOARD TABLES.—With tops of marble, silver, etc.

CUPBOARDS (*Armaria*).—Holding arms originally; afterwards used for storage generally.

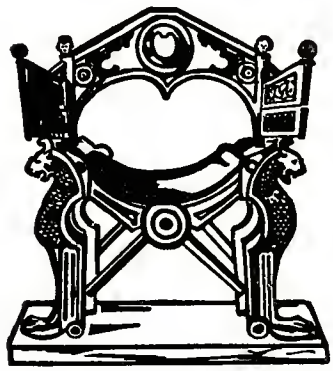
During the latter days of the Roman Empire, gold and silver became so plentiful that they were used for the utensils for cooking and other household purposes; small wonder, then, that rich booty should have rewarded Alaric when, with his hordes of Goths, he sacked the imperial city in 410 A.D.

With the fall of Rome the Classic period of Art may be said to have practically come to an end. The panoramic conflicts of dynasties and races and the struggles of rival beliefs, resulting in the gradual formation of a fresh order of society, notably affected the furniture as well as the architecture of the Byzantine and succeeding periods.

BYZANTINE AND ROMANESQUE

The peaceful and refined arts associated with the furnishing of the home were little likely, even if flourishing, to survive amid the barbaric panorama of incessant war and religious persecution which lasted from the capture of Rome by the Goths in 410 A.D. until the fall of Constantinople in 1453. The intervening centuries witnessed the rise of the Carlovingians, the conquest of Spain and of upper Africa by the Moors, the appearance and marvellously rapid accept-

ance of Mahomet and his creed by the Arab races, the slower but finally even more far-reaching acceptance of Christianity by the European, and the resulting struggle of the rival creeds for Jerusalem: the times were destructive rather than constructive of the applied arts and crafts.

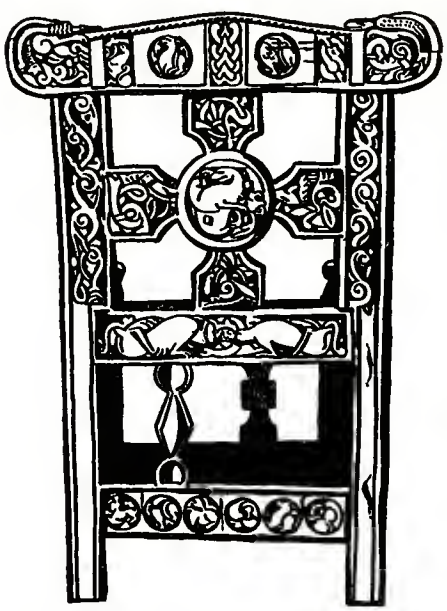


CHAIR OF DAGOBERT. SEVENTH CENTURY. MUSÉE DES SOUVERAINS, PARIS.

To the lover of vividly romantic history the period is fascinating beyond measure; but the historian finds singularly little decorative furniture in existence to assist him in reconstructing the home equipments of Byzantine days.

A throne known as the Chair of St. Peter — and certainly preserved in the basilica of that name at Rome, encased in a bronze covering by Bernini —was probably made between the fourth and sixth centuries. Tradition also alleges that it formed part of the furniture of the Senator Pudens, —that early convert who gave up his house to the Christians. The arcading of the back and other details of this chair show the Byzantine mingling of the Classic (European) Greek with the Asiatic Greek which borrowed the forms of the monotonously rich decorations of Persian art.

BYZANTINE "CHAIR OF ST. PETER," ROME. OF WOOD, OVERLAID WITH IVORY AND GOLD. 300 A.D. TO 500 A.D.



VIKING CHAIR. TENTH CENTURY.

In St. Mark's at Venice—that superb if somewhat "accidental" realisation of Byzantine symbolism and architectural ideals—is another historic chair, part of the spoils taken

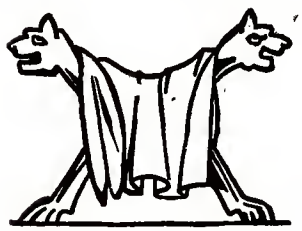
by the Latins at their capture of Constantinople, in the early part of the thirteenth century.

The pressure of the Northern barbarians upon the Western Empire, of which Rome was still the chief city, caused an exodus of the wealthier inhabitants, who fled to Constantinople, the less harassed capital of the Eastern Empire, taking with them their most valued portable furniture and other possessions.

VIKING CHAIR OR STALL. FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

From the reign of Constantine, Constantinople had grown in importance, and was, until its downfall, the centre of the arts associated with the home; indeed, Byzantine furniture of the later period appears to have been quite unrestrained in its luxurious materials and ornament.

Many of the skilled artists and craftsmen of the Roman Empire, even before its division into East and West, wandered over Europe, seeking outlet for their arts and scattering seeds which, slowly fructifying through the Middle Ages, ripened into appreciation of the Renaissance movement.



MEDIÆVAL STOOL. ELEVENTH CENTURY.

The debased treatment of Classic architecture and decoration known as Romanesque was evolving in Italy during the settlement of the Northern barbarians. From it arose the Gothic with its pointed arch, but in Italy the Classic tradition, though emasculated, yet survived, and was comparatively less affected by Gothic art until the Renaissance.

MEDIÆVAL STOOL. ELEVENTH CENTURY.

The tenets of the Mohammedan faith, by their interdict of the human figure in art, gave rise to the Arabesque style, which, with

its peculiar pointed arch and characteristic decoration, was carried into Spain as well as Constantinople, and developed, in the subject provinces of Egypt and Sicily, into the interesting style known as Saracenic.

ASIATIC ARTS

Of all the native crafts of the East, one of the most important is woodworking. Its antiquity is evidenced by the fact that many of the details of the most ancient stone architecture are obviously copied from prior woodwork forms, a reversal of the European practice in later days of representing architectural forms in wood.

CARVED CHAIR, 250 A.D., DUG UP FROM SAND-BURIED CITY IN CHINESE TURKESTAN.

The innate conservatism of Asiatic races, until forced into contact with Western ideas, has manifested itself in adherence to patterns handed down from remote generations, and also in such social systems as that of the Indian castes, whereby certain arts and crafts are strictly confined to a few families.

CARVED AND PAINTED WOODEN BOSSES. SOUTHWARK CATHEDRAL ROOF.

DECORATIVE FURNITURE IN BRITAIN PRIOR TO 1475

ONE has a sense of added injury against the British climate when remembering the probability that its damp and corroding nature has had much to do with the scarcity of early examples of Furniture.

CELTIC ORNAMENT FROM THE ABERLEMNO CROSS.

MEDIÆVAL MANUSCRIPT. TENTH CENTURY. KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR SEATED ON A FOLDING CHAIR.

ROMAN

Perhaps the earliest furniture of at all a decorative character was brought over by the Romans

CELTIC ORNAMENT FROM THE ABERLEMNO CROSS.

during their occupation of Britain. It was doubtless identical with that used in Rome, and described in the preceding chapter.

CELTIC

Though the Celts were clever art craftsmen in metal, and appear from the old romances to have made chests for their clothes, no relics of their early work remain.

SAXON AND NORMAN

Even when including the final furniture of mundane existence, we possess no indisputable pieces of woodwork before the seventh century. In Faversham and Chynnog churches, and at Wimborne Minster, are rude ark-

THE "ARCHANGEL" SIDE OF INCISED COFFIN OF ST. CUTHBERT IN DURHAM CATHEDRAL.

THE VENERABLE BEDE'S VENERABLE CHAIR.

trunks bound with iron. The authenticity of the incised coffin of St. Cuthbert is traceable throughout its disturbed existence. The saint's burial took place in 688 A.D., in the church which has become Durham Cathedral. The coffin was disinterred after a few years, to be deposited in a shrine frequently mentioned by Norman writers. Opened by Henry the Eighth's Commissioners, it was next buried below a slab, around which may be seen the grooves worn by the knees of the many pilgrims who yearly visited the spot. Again opened in 1827, the remains were

PLATE IV

LATE GOTHIC SCHRANK

In the Bavarian National Museum, Munich

With Hanging Light (*Leuchterweibschen*), from Albert Dürer's house at Nuremburg

The Tyrolese appear to have taken full advantage of the natural resources and geographical position which combined to render their country one of the wealthiest in Europe towards the close of the Middle Ages. The silver mines were at their maximum of productiveness during the fifteenth century, enabling the mediæval magnates to supplement local arts, by retaining the most skilful of the many Flemish and German craftsmen who journeyed through the Alpine passes, on their return from apprenticeship in Italy.

The *Landsknechte* also, those mercenaries who sold their swords to causes good, bad, or indifferent, with equal ardour, were at this period mainly Tyrolese, and agreeably combined the duty of adequately remunerating themselves, with that of showing remembrance of stay-at-home kinsmen, by bringing home spoils and souvenirs of such wealth that, despite the gradual decline of Tyrolese prosperity, the country probably, until the period of the Napoleonic wars, rivalled in art treasures even the richest of the famed Italian States.

In the Cupboard here shown the carved and pierced ornamental details, upon grounds painted red or blue, are of lime or linden—a wood which in Central Europe during the fifteenth century shared popularity with the slow-growing fir known as the *Arbe* or *Zirve*.

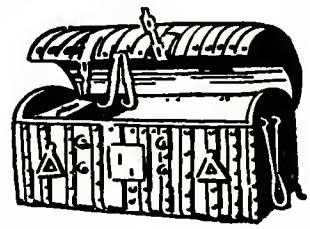
The doors and other constructional framework are of ash, a banding of lime and palisander wood dividing the doors from the pilasters and friezes.

Such pieces of craftsmanship as the Schrank strengthen one's conviction that the German temperament finds its most congenial expression in decorative furniture, through the medium of Gothic rather than of Renaissance; the convolutions of late mediæval leafage, affording scope for the Teutonic love of the intricate.

The handles and escutcheons are less elaborated than is usual with German work of the period. The metalworkers of the Tyrol and the Netherlands, by the end of the fifteenth century, had taken their art as seriously as did their Spanish or French confrères, and, indeed, at times surpassed them in the consistent enrichment of their fashionings.

The much abused adjective "quaint" may with truth be applied to the horned-mermaid hanging light (*Leuchterweibschen*), the original of which is to be seen in Albert Dürer's house at Nuremburg. No satisfactory evidence exists of its having been designed by Dürer, and such pieces may well be of somewhat earlier date. Seemingly made of plaster or clay, these pendant lights were frequently painted in many colours, the "wings," however, being invariably of horn.

transferred to a new coffin, the old one being thrust away in a cupboard, where a few years ago in a state of semi-powder it was found and reconstructed by the skill and zeal of a local architect and antiquarian.



COFFER IN PYX CHAPEL, THOUGHT TO HAVE BELONGED TO EDWARD II.

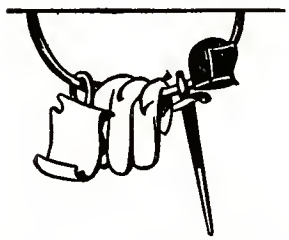
The Venerable Bede's Chair, to which fuller reference will be found in the chapter, "Some Seats of the Mighty," may be classed among the oldest examples of British woodwork; great antiquity is also claimed for a treasure coffer in the Pyx Chapel, Westminster.

SAXON HOMES AND FURNITURE

In the description of Cedric the Thane's *Aula* (*Ivanhoe*), Sir Walter Scott's antiquarian accuracy appears for once to be as unimpeachable as his enthusiasm always. For about the quarter of the length of the apartment the floor was raised by a step, and this space, which was called the daïs, was occupied only by the principal members of the family and visitors of distinction. A table, covered with scarlet cloth, was placed transversely across the platform, from the middle of which ran the longer and lower board, whereat the domestics and inferior persons fed. The plan resembled in form the letter T. Massive chairs and settles of carved oak were placed upon the daïs, and over these seats and elevated tables was fastened a canopy of cloth, which served in some degree to protect the personages who occupied that distinguished station from the weather, and especially from the rain, which in some places found its way through the ill-constructed roof. The wall of this upper end of the hall, as far as the daïs extended, was covered with hangings,

MEDIÆVAL CHAIR IN HOSPITAL OF ST. CROSS, WINCHESTER.

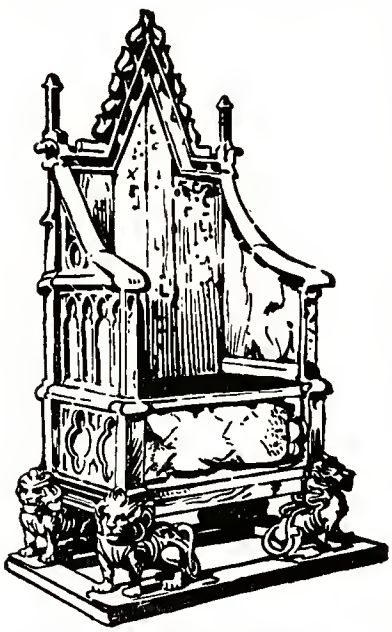
and upon the floor there was a carpet. In the centre of the upper table were placed two chairs more elevated than the rest, for the master and mistress of the family.



MEDIÆVAL. A "PERCHE" OR WOODEN HALF-HOOP UPON WHICH ARE HUNG A KNIGHT'S SHIELD, COAT OF MAIL, SWORD, AND HELMET. FROM ILLUMINATED MS. "LE PELERINAGE DE LA VIE HUMAINE."

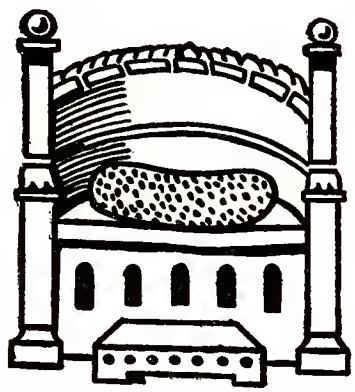
Anglo-Saxon tables were of circular or oblong plan—the latter shape usually having rounded corners — and are usually shown in the manuscript drawings covered with a cloth, but whilst abundant testimony exists in the old MS. to the forms of ancient English tables, the oldest surviving specimens—those at the neighbouring cathedrals of Salisbury and Winchester—supremely interesting as they are historically, are of so archaic a type as to be valueless when regarded as pieces of decorative furniture.

SEAT ON DAÏS.



THE CORONATION CHAIR IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

Norman decorative furniture appears to have much resemblance to Saxon, but was more influenced by the debased Classic or Romanesque.



SEMI-CIRCULAR SEAT OF TENTH CENTURY. FROM AN OLD MANUSCRIPT.

We find, in both Saxon and Norman times, that folding seats of the camp-stool order, with finials of animals' heads and terminals of claws, were used by the more wealthy.

PLATE V

OAK DOUBLE HUTCH

The Property of Guy Laking, Esq., M.V.O., S. James's Palace

Height, 4 ft. 7 in.; width, 3 ft. 11 in.; depth, 1 ft. 4 in.

The lover of old crafts and arts sings no praises, as such, of the Reformation or the Puritan; he thinks with regret that England would probably possess to-day many an old *armoire* or *huche*, similar to the over-leaf example, but for the iconoclastic zeal which found expression in the destruction of all that was valued by the old order.

Its birthplace, assigned traditionally to France—*Plessis-les-Tours*; some of its details indicate a later date than that architecturally gloomy pile. In all essentials it is as typical of English work of the sixteenth century, as of French during the latter part of the fifteenth.

The double hutch was an early link in the long chain of evolution by which that modern symbol of man's prosperity and pomp, the sideboard, has been reached.

Linenfold panelling—the pattern of which in this example varies in the lower panels—appears to have been inspired by, and to owe its widespread use during the domination of the Catholic creed to, the folds into which the chalice veil falls when covering the Host.

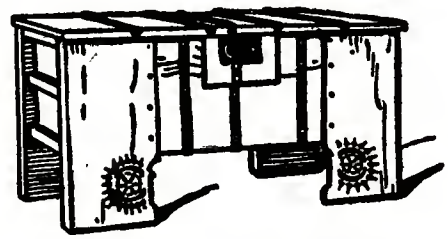
During the Late Gothic and Tudor periods there is ample evidence of the continuance of English fondness for bright colours. Not only were clothes, embroideries, and textiles generally of

strong primary and secondary colours; but the wainscot panelling, which charms modern eyes chiefly by the natural beauty of the wood, was painted with vermilion, green, and yellow. Thus treated, the walls and tapestries form an excellent foil in colour to the oaken furniture, which, however, was often painted also.

The ornament upon a coffer at Newport in oils shows that medium to have been used by artistic monks in England more than a century before the period of Mr. Laking's hutch. Henry the Third, too, commanded his Sheriff of Wiltshire to wainscot "the King's lower room, to paint it of a green colour, to put a border to it, and to enrich this border with painted heads of queens and kings."

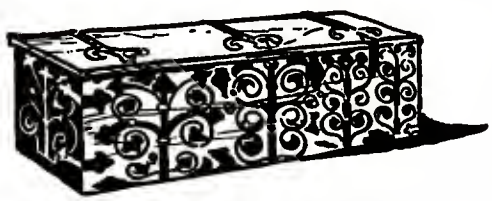
Edwin Foley

In the tenth century the seats were completely panelled with circular-headed pierced arches, followed (upon the advent of pointed architecture) by the high pediment, such as the Coronation Chair of Westminster Abbey, which was made, painted, and gilt about the end of the thirteenth century, but, as is shown in a succeeding chapter, has shared the fate of the chairs of Dagobert and St. Peter, in having later additions giving it the appearance of a Gothic and ecclesiastical stall.

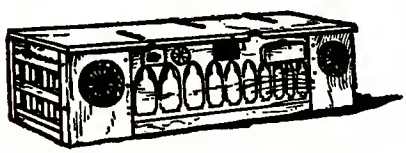


CARVED OAK CHEST. ARUNDEL CHURCH.

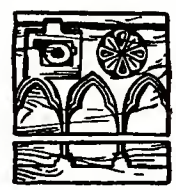
In mediæval times the arts were the recreations of the cloisters, the monks themselves working and teaching. One feels sympathy and gratitude for those old illuminators and patient craftsmen who preserved the arts from extinction during the darkness of the Middle Ages. The art-craftsmen of early mediæval days must have had a somewhat sorry time, for, unless in the service of the king or nobles, they were utterly dependent upon the monasteries and abbeys for employment and protection. It was therefore but natural that the carpenters and joiners, carvers and painters, should reproduce the ornaments in domestic decoration which they had been accustomed to use for church purposes.



MEDIÆVAL ENGLAND. IRON-BOUND CHEST. BRAMPTON CHURCH.



FOURTEENTH-CENTURY OAK CHEST IN CLIMPING CHURCH.



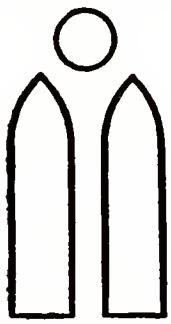
DETAIL OF PANEL OAK CHEST IN CLIMPING CHURCH.

In some respects, however, throughout the Middle Ages, Gothic, and Tudor days, craftsmen were allowed more freedom than is the workman of to-day, since the details of the work were largely left to their skill and fancy. One of the resulting charms is the absence of mechanical repetition. The decoration of panels almost invariably differs; the worker's personality was allowed free

play, and more than compensated for any lack of the technical finish which his constant duplication of patterns might have engendered.

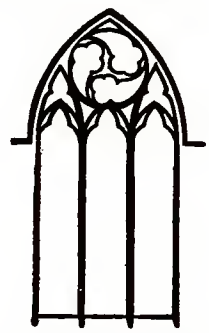
THE GOTHIC STYLES

Whilst it is not possible to compress the whole art and mystery of Gothic architecture and its attendant crafts, the furniture of mediæval times is so strictly a reflection of contemporary ecclesi-



LANCET. FIRST POINTED OR EARLY ENGLISH GOTHIC.

GOTHIC CARVING. FROM AMIENS.



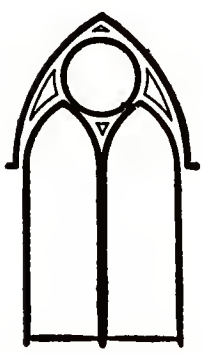
SECOND POINTED OR DECORATIVE GOTHIC.

astical architecture that a remembrance of the subjoined arch forms and dates of the divisions of English Gothic will be found serviceable in studying of Gothic decorative woodwork, as well as Gothic architecture.

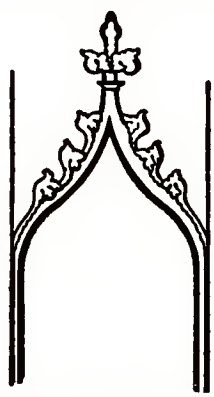
First Pointed or Early English Gothic, 1189–1307.

Second Pointed or Decorated English Gothic, 1307–1377.

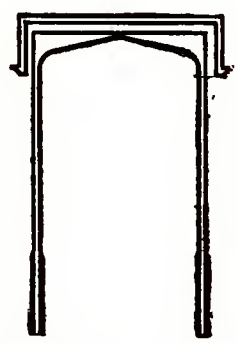
Third Pointed, Late, or Perpendicular English Gothic, 1377–1509.



TRANSITIONAL. FROM EARLY ENGLISH TO DECORATED ENGLISH GOTHIC.



"OGEE" CROCKETED: THIRD POINTED OR PERPENDICULAR ENGLISH GOTHIC.



DEPRESSED OR "TUDOR": THIRD POINTED OR PERPENDICULAR ENGLISH GOTHIC.

PLATE VI

CARVED OAK DRESSOIR—LOUIS XII

In the Musée Cluny, Paris — Height, 4 ft. 4 in.; width, 3 ft. 10 in.

Whilst in England mediævalism in the design of decorative furniture offered a prolonged, if waning, resistance to the "Romayne work," from its introduction at the end of the fifteenth until practically the close of the sixteenth century, in France, Flamboyant Gothic had exhausted itself amid the turmoil and alarms of the English invasions, and at their conclusion in 1453—a period curiously coincident with the capture of Constantinople by the Turks — the canons of the Renaissance were examined, accepted, and adhered to for centuries. The reservation and blending with the older style, which characterised Tudor woodwork in England, is far less noticeable in French work, and lasted a much shorter period.

Indeed, the *dressoir* over-leaf, though allotted by the authorities of the Musée Cluny, upon doubtless indisputable authority, to the times of the twelfth Louis, might, if judged solely upon the evidence of its crocketed uprights, have been made at least thirty years before, when the ambitions of the eleventh and craftiest of the Louis, conflicting with those of Charles the Bold of Burgundy, created such a picturesque chapter in French history.

Dressoirs were not always of the modest proportions of this example; their sizes, indeed, grew until circumscribed by decree; but no such limitation could be placed upon those used by the king. Several are mentioned in contemporary MS. of truly regal

proportions. An old chronicle describes one used, half a century before the period of the over-leaf example, at the wedding of Philip the Good of Burgundy to Isabella of Portugal. It is stated to have been "Twenty feet long, on a platform two feet high, and well enclosed by barriers three feet high, on one side of which was a little gate for entrance and exit. . . . The three upper tiers were covered and loaded with vessels of fine gold, and the two lower ones with many great vessels of silver gilt."

Dressoirs throughout both the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries proclaim their origin, by frankly presenting the appearance of chests raised on legs.

The contemporary tapestry is also from that fascinating treasure house of French mediæval and Renaissance art — the Hôtel Cluny. Would that London possessed some noble mansion, forming as sympathetic architectural environment for our Tudor forefathers' furniture and household gods as is afforded by both the Cluny and Carnavalet Museums of Paris.

OUR COLOUR-LOVING ANCESTORS

Judging from contemporary writings, and from the colour usually shown upon the furniture in manuscript drawings of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the English were so passionately attached to colour, and cared so little for the natural wood, as to give ground for the statement, that "they painted everything they could afford, and whitewashed the rest." Indeed, one of the main objections of the citizens of London to the introduction of coal was that its smoke impaired the whiteness of their houses. Traces still exist upon some few old examples, such as the Faversham Coffer (Plate II.), showing that the work was usually painted, and that gilding was also resorted to at times, as in the case of the Coronation Chair.

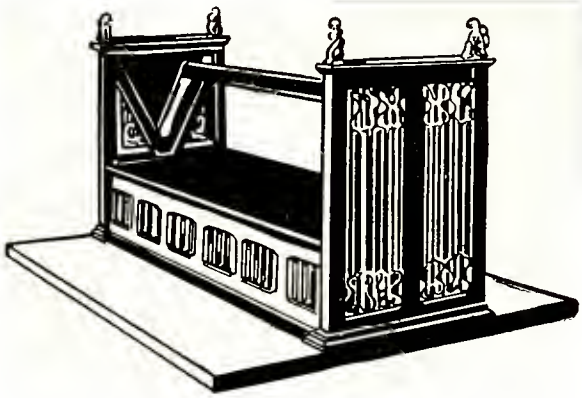
CARVED CHESTNUT COFFER-FRONT. FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

Until nearly the close of the Gothic period the woodwork branches of the applied arts were so subject to ecclesiasticism that it is little exaggeration to regard them as by the Church, of the Church, and for the Church. They are therefore outside our province.

CLOSE OF THE MIDDLE AGES

Towards the end of the fifteenth-century, clerical dominance was declining. Feudalism was upon its last legs, internal dissensions assisting its fall. By the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 the long-tottering and shrunken remnant of the once all-powerful Roman Empire received its death-blow. In the East the Crescent had triumphed over the Cross.

The Middle Ages, with all their romantic vicissitudes and vivid contrasts, were coming to an end. It had been a period when the



MEDIÆVAL DOUBLE BENCH WITH MOVABLE BACK RAIL, USED IN FRONT OF FIREPLACE.

GOTHIC SQUARE FLOWER.

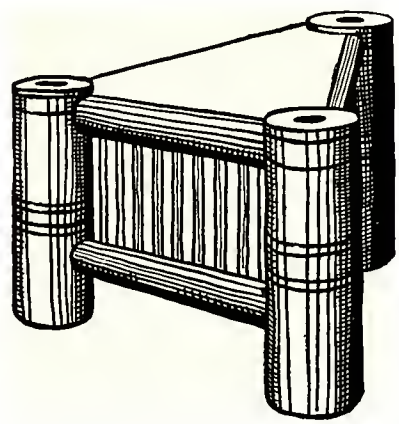
sixpence often possessed more purchasing power than does the sovereign in present days; when the trestle table could be laden, until it groaned, in a manner satisfying the old-style novelist, with beef or pork at a cost of a halfpenny per pound, with mutton at three farthings, strong beer at one penny per gallon, and choicest foreign wines at eightpence per gallon; when tea, coffee, and tobacco were unheard of, and a lump of sugar a right royal luxury. But it had been a period also when man's life and physical freedom depended more on the power of his good right arm than on any protection of the laws; when few outside the monastery or the castle could read, and fewer write; when miserable hovels of mud were the homes of the mass of the people, and oiled cloth the "glazing" of the window openings of the rich.

FORMS OF GOTHIC FOLIATION.

FORMS OF GOTHIC FOLIATION.

These were not conditions under which the arts of the home were likely to flourish, and,

profoundly interesting as are the examples of decorative furniture left us of the times, one is glad, as the common folk of those times would probably have been, to pass on to the succeeding periods, which witnessed the decrease of ecclesiasticism and practically the commencement of the use of decorative woodwork in the private homes of Britain, and which therefore offer more ample records and fuller scope for our narrative.



FOURTEENTH-CENTURY SEAT. BRITISH.

A TIME-TABLE OF ARCHITECTURAL STYLES

(Largely based upon the divisions suggested by Messrs. Russell Sturgis and Banister Fletcher)

4700 B.C. EGYPTIAN (Pyramids). 4700 B.C. BABYLONIAN (Monuments). 1900 B.C. CYCLOPEAN. 500 B.C. PERSIAN. 400 B.C. CHINESE. 200 B.C. INDIAN.

GREECE—600 B.C., First Temple. 600–500 B.C., Early Period to Persian Wars.
,, 500–400 B.C., Classic Period to decline of Athens.
,, 400–146 B.C., Late Period to conquest by Rome.

ROME—To 146 B.C., Græco-Etruscan. Græco-Roman, 146 B.C.–300 A.D.
Latin, 300 A.D.–800 A.D. Byzantine–Romanesque, 476 A.D. to Gothic.
Moresque, 600 A.D. Anglo-Saxon, 449–1066.

A.D.	ENGLAND.	ITALY.	FRANCE.	GERMANY.	SPAIN.	A.D.
1100	Norman, 1066–1154.	Romanesque, Lombardic, Gothic.	Romanesque (Second Epoch), 1000–1137.	Romanesque.	Moresque. Romanesque.	1100
1150	Transitional, 1154–1189.		Romanesque (Third Epoch), 1137–1223.	Rhenish Romanesque		1150
1200	Early English or First Pointed Gothic, 1189–1307.		Gothic Ogival. Primaire, 1223–1314. Ogival. Rayonnant, 1223–1422. Ogival. Flamboyant, 1422–1453.	Late Rhenish Romanesque.	Gothic.	1200
1250						1250
1300	Decorated or Middle Pointed Gothic, 1307–1377. Transitional.			Romanesque Franco-Gothic.	Mudejar Gothic.	1300
1350						1350
1400	Perpendicular or Third Pointed Gothic, 1377–1509.	Dawn of the Renaissance, Early or Free.		Gothic.	Mudejar.	1400
1450			Renaissance (First Period), 1453–1515.			1450
1500	Tudor (Tudor–Renaissance Elizabethan), 1509–1603.	High or Classic Renaissance, 1500–1580.	Renaissance (Second Period), 1515–1547.	Early Renaissance.	Early Renaissance and Plateresque.	1500
1550						1550
1600	Stuart (Stuart–Renaissance Jacobean Commonwealth, Carolean), 1603–1688.	Renaissance Barocco (Rococo) and Decadenza.	Renaissance (Third Period), 1547–1614.	Renaissance, Middle Period.	Plateresque, Middle Renaissance, Herrara.	1600
1650			Louis XIII., 1614–1643.			1650
1700	William and Anne (William and Mary, Queen Anne, Early Georgian), 1689–1727.		Louis XIV., 1643–1715.	Late Renaissance.	Late Renaissance, Churriguera.	1700
1750	Georgian, 1714–1830 (Chippendale, Adam, Hepplewhite, Sheraton, Furniture Periods).		Régence and Louis XV., 1715–1774.	"Zopf."	Churrigueresque.	1750
1800			Louis XVI., 1774–1789. Directoire, and Consulate, 1795–1799. First Empire, 1804–1814.			1800

THE LATE GOTHIC PERIOD IN BRITISH DECORATIVE FURNITURE.

THE last quarter of the fifteenth century witnessed political and social changes greatly affecting decorative furniture. Feudal England, monk-ridden, noble-ridden, and ever at war with her northern neighbour, ceased her long civil struggle to enter, bereft of continental possessions, upon an era under the Tudors in which the power of monk and noble was to be diminished, that of the monarch to increase, and the printing press, established practically by Caxton in 1475, to lay the foundations of a greater domination than king, priest, or noble had ever possessed.

The marriage of Henry VII. with the heiress of the White Rose, by uniting the claims of York and Lancaster to the throne, terminated the internecine struggle of the Roses, and cleared the way for the pursuit of peaceful industries, and for the building-up of the British Constitution with its ideals of parliamentary supremacy and individual liberty.

POLITICS AFFECTING FURNITURE

At the end of the century the population of England was barely four millions; far less than that of present-day London alone. The middle classes appear to have quietly profited by the dissensions of the upper, making great advances in wealth and independence during the Civil War. They were no longer content with furniture of severely utilitarian type; and it was part of the policy of the

early Tudors to encourage the prosperity, the comfort, and even the luxury of the smaller gentry and citizens, as a counterpoise to the power of the nobles.

Sanitation was a "sealed book"; except that the nobles moved from castle to castle in order that "the same might sweeten." The common people, having no such alternative, could not have found life always pleasant. The narrow, gloomy, and unsavoury streets were forcing beds for fevers and the plague, whilst medical methods were even more empirical and conflicting than those of to-day, if one may credit the statement that during one of the pestilences a certain practitioner cured more than any of his brethren by tying pickled herrings to the feet of his patients.

MEDIÆVAL AND TUDOR WOODWORKERS,

In common with other craftsmen, did much of their work in the open air in front of their houses. They were confined to certain streets with their fellow-workmen of the same trade: a restriction which favoured *esprit de corps* and tended greatly to strengthen the trade guilds, whose power was more absolute but whose objects somewhat resembled those of the modern trade union, except that the technical improvement and honour of their craft was aimed at, not solely the raising of the wage standards. The various "gilds" had distinguishing marks and privileges. A charter was granted in 1477 to

THE GUILD OF TAPISERS,

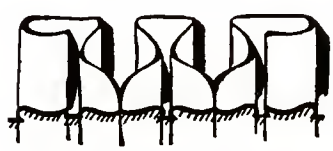
The mediæval forerunners of the upholder and the upholsterer of our day; their guild must have existed before then, or why should Chaucer sing—

> An Haberdasher and a Carpenter,
> A Webbe, a Dyer, and a Tapisere
> Were alle y clothed in a livere
> Of a solempne and grete fraternitie.

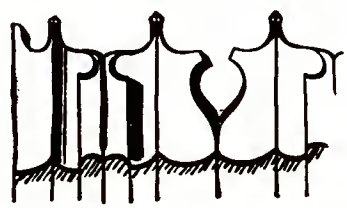
For many a year the monks had been rivals as well as patrons to the craftsmen associated with the formative arts. The extent to which they practised until the dissolution of the monasteries may be gauged from the report upon one of the monastic houses, presented to Thomas Cromwell in Tudor days, "That there was not one religious person there, but that he could and did use either embrotherying, writing books with very fair hand, . . . carving, painting, or graffing."

CHURCH INFLUENCE UPON DECORATIVE FURNITURE

Under the rule of the Church a serious and unswerving devotional purpose had been imparted to architecture and the allied arts, imbuing them with the atmosphere of the cloister; narrow but sincere, and tending, therefore, to the expression of a dignified if ascetic creed; bringing, one ventures to think, to many a brother in his cell peace and joy in work, which his pious meditations had mayhap been unable to yield.



OAK LINENFOLD PATTERN. FIFTEENTH CENTURY.



OAK LINENFOLD PATTERN. LATE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

Throughout the civil wars which raged in England, churches were sanctuaries inviolate: well able until Cromwellian times to keep their own and other's valuables. We have therefore a far larger proportion of Church furniture than of the chattels of the nobles; but after making due allowance for this, it is impossible to avoid the conviction that the Church was in England during the Middle Ages the chief patron as well as the chief repository of nearly all decorative woodwork.

PLATE VII

INLAID MUNIMENT CHEST

Presented by Sir Hugh Offley, when Lord Mayor of London in 1556, to St. Mary Overie, now St. Saviour's, Southwark Cathedral

By permission of Canon Thompson, D.D. Length, 6 ft. 6¾ in.; height, 3 ft. 3¼ in.; depth, 2 ft. 5¼ in.

Church authorities of the past appear to have been more tolerant of anachronisms, and less anxious to secure uniformity in matters of architecture and decoration, than are those of the present day. The donor of this singularly interesting chest must otherwise have needed all the weight of his official position to secure its welcome; one would fancy the insertion of the newly arrived and alien flat Doric pilasters, pediments, and other Renaissance details, in a piece to be used in a purely Gothic church, would have sufficiently imperilled the prospects of its acceptance by the Church, without decorating it with the bright and secularly vivacious colours of marqueterie in which England was now attaining considerable proficiency. Is it on this account that many generations of vergers, imbued with reverence for their Gothic environment, and armed with varnish, beeswax, and turpentine, have apparently directed their efforts towards obliterating the hues of the inlays?

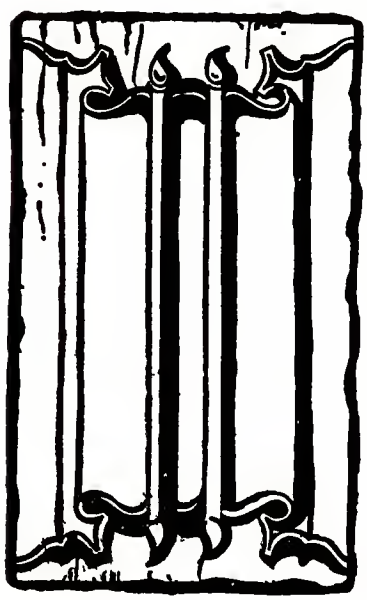
The drawing is an endeavour to present the appearance of the chest prior to its encasing with polish. One can detect at least eight of the woods used: oak, cherry, yew, holly, ebony, ash, walnut, and rosewood; whilst staining and shading were also resorted to, the inlayer having been particularly happy in his choice of holly knots to represent the stonework of the pedimented divisions.

The Offley Chest would well repay for the unveiling of its surfaces, that one might more clearly see the richly ornamented armorial bearings, merchant's marks, and initials of its donor, as well as the arabesques, the conventional and floral work of its pilasters, and the simplified elevations of Nonesuch Palace which the inlayer has represented on its panels. The piece is, with the exception of the drawers in the plinth, quite intact.

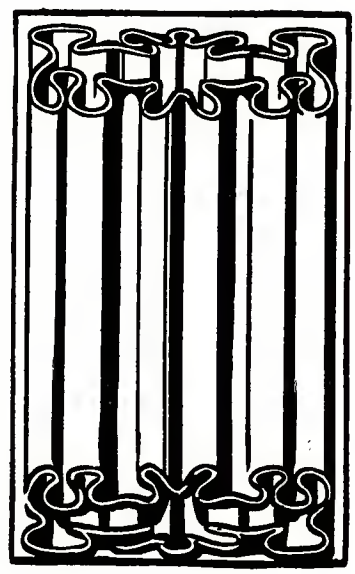
Being devoid of ecclesiastical symbols and in keeping with secular surroundings, no apology is needed for placing the chest against a background showing part of the fine range of wainscoting taken from an old house at Exeter of the same period. The carving of this typical Elizabethan wainscoting is of such unusual technical excellence that it has been attributed to foreign rather than English workmen, who, it must be confessed, were not their equals in deft craftsmanship. There seems some likelihood in the ascription to Flemish woodworkers, since they may have followed their cloth and wool-weaving countrymen, who at this period crossed the seas to avoid the persecutions of Alva, and settled in the west of England in considerable numbers.

OLD MANUSCRIPT ILLUSTRATIONS

Until the Renaissance had become well rooted in England, the ideas and ideals of Gothic or Pointed architecture so determined and dominated furniture that some knowledge of its successive styles is requisite for the correct understanding and "placing" of the woodwork.[1] The representations of furniture in old manuscripts, whether romances, histories, or *horae* depicting contemporary or prior events, are often, despite their archaic perspective, of great value when the date of the drawing can be ascertained, as the mediæval artist invariably drew the furniture of his own times in his unperturbed ignorance of those he is supposed to be illustrating. Examples of this practice are common in old manuscripts; in an amusing instance occurring in the Harleian manuscripts, David and his choir are represented seated on chests carved with Gothic tracery.



CARVED OAK *PARCHEMIN* PANEL. HAMPTON COURT.



CARVED OAK LINENFOLD PANEL. RYE HOUSE.

We are now, however, approaching times of which actual examples are fortunately obtainable, and reliance upon old manuscripts becomes unnecessary.

[1] See illustrations of Gothic details in preceding chapter.

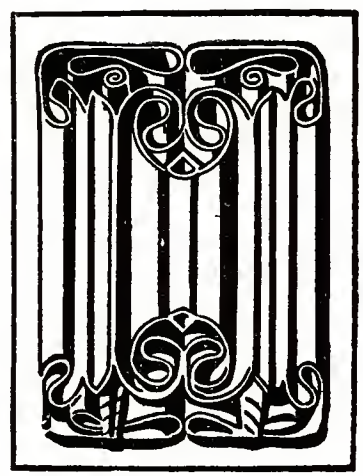
THE GOTHIC WOODWORKER'S KIT

One would like to see a Gothic or Tudor woodworker's outfit; he certainly possessed no moulding planes equalling the modern kind, yet probably was frequently a skilful all-round craftsman; expert in the carving of such details as the ribbed and otherwise decorated mouldings with shaped ends, known as

LINENFOLD AND PARCHEMIN PATTERNS,

Which were introduced in panel decoration during the last quarter of the fifteenth century. The Linenfold was based upon and emblematic of the veil covering the chalice at the consecration of the Host in Catholic ritual: it appeared towards the conclusion of the Gothic era in French architecture and Flemish furniture, and thence travelled to England. The *Parchemin* pattern was derived from the parchment scrolls rolled upon a rod. Linenfold and parchment designs merge and blend in a somewhat confusing way, but the chief distinction between the two is the introduction of the rod round which the parchment scroll is wound.

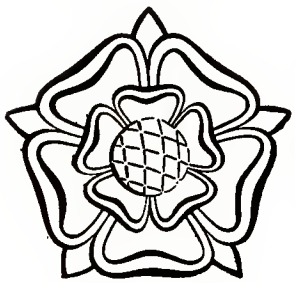
THE LINENFOLD PATTERN ON MR. GUY LAKING'S DOUBLE HUTCH. (Colour Plate 5, Part I.)



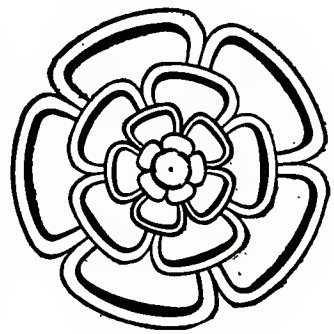
LINENFOLD OAK PANELLING, COSTESSEY HALL, NORFOLK.

THE TUDOR ROSE

The Tudor Rose, which flowered prolifically in decoration during the latter half of the fifteenth century, was at first coloured to suit the Lancastrian or Yorkish proclivities of its owners; but after the marriage terminating the civil strife by uniting the parties, the roses were often decorated in the formerly rival colours.



TUDOR ROSE.



TUDOR ROSE.

"ROMAYNE" WORK AND GOTHIC

The last forms of Gothic inspiration, were succeeded a few years later by the first indications that the intellectual and art movement of the Renaissance of Italy was crossing the Channel, and that England would fall under its inspiring influence. An isolated forerunner — a carved oak hutch — bequeathed by Vicar Sudbury, vicar of Louth, to Louth Church, is the earliest instance extant of the English adaptation of the Renaissance detail known as "Romayne" work. The heads are stated to be portraits of Henry VIII. and his consort, Elizabeth of York.

HUTCH PRESENTED BY VICAR SUDBURY TO LOUTH CHURCH NOT LATER THAN 1504.

The "fell pageny disease," to which the old Gothic was to succumb, made but little headway, and was, at most, but sporadic until Henry VIII. was well seated upon his throne.

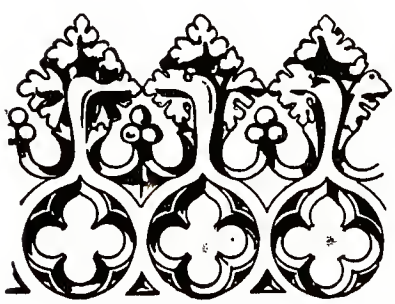
Gothic was still the model upon which men built and decorated, and it must be remembered that, cold and unsympathetic as many of the old Gothic churches and cathedrals often appear in these days, in pre-Puritan times they sang with the chorister, in untutored but not unpleasing colour upon their walls, ceilings, and windows.

THE MEDIÆVAL HALL

The changes which were evolving in the political and social life influenced the home and its furniture. In the—more or less—merry mediæval days, master, mistress, man and maid sat together in the hall, the heart of the house; all shared in the household events, the incidents of the daily comedy or drama were worked out in common: a domestic picture so pleasant to the idealist, that one's sympathies are with Piers the Plowman when, in the fourteenth century, commenting on the changes evolving, he complains that

TUDOR ROSE IN SPANDREL.

> Elenge (i.e. lonely) is the halle eberg dag in the weke,
> There the lord ne the ladye lyketh not to sytte;
> Now hath eche a rule to eaten bg himself
> In a pribee parlour.



GOTHIC BRADISHING. SALISBURY.

The Church objected to the withdrawal of the family from the hall, as contrary to the principle of the communal life, which was part of the monastic system. A certain Bishop Grosseteste commanded the continuance of the old system, "Without peril of sychnesse and werynesse ete all of ye in the halle before your meyny" (i.e. *ménage*).

Although the change commenced in the fourteenth century, its progress was so slow that it had evidently not been adopted or acquiesced in, by the commencement of the sixteenth century, for among the Ordinances of Eltham in 1526 is one noticing with condemnation that "sundrie noblemen and gentlemen and others doe much delight in corners and secret places."

TABLES—THRESTULE AND DORMANT

As long as the hall continued to be the central point of united household life, used not only for sitting and dining but also for recreations, it was desirable that its furnishings should be easily movable. As long as the cry was—

> Come, Musicians, play.
> A hall! A hall! Give room and foot it girls,
> More light, ye knaves!—and turn the tables up!

so long was the trestle-table the best possible form. The table of to-day is descended from the "board" of the Middle Ages. The old term survives not only in the sideboard, our "Boards" of Admiralty, Trade, and Health, but also in our school boarders and "board" wages,—a dozen meanings other than that to which usage now restricts the word were attached to the "table"; for example, a picture, a list, a game of backgammon, and many another object having a flat surface.

TRESTLE TABLES

The board of the Middle Ages was usually an easily removable top, supported on trestles (a corruption of the original *threstule*, for three-footed supports). The "trestle" and the stool were largely, in both name and purpose, identical.

Trestle tables were not always crude carpenter's work, if one may credit Lydgate's

Borde of Heban and of Ybery White.

A form of semi-trestle table was also employed in which shaped supports upheld the heavy top, whilst

THE TABLE DORMANT

OAK TABLE. PROPERTY OF GEO. C. HAITÉ, ESQ.

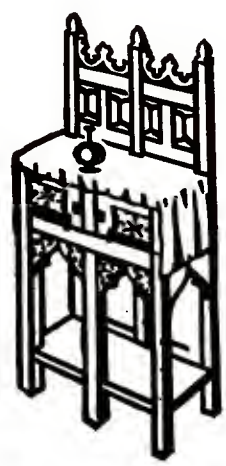
Of mediæval days was probably a great table on the daïs at the upper end of the hall: "Beginning the *table dormant*," signifying taking the first place at the feast. Chaucer wished to emphasise the profuse hospitality of the Frankeleyn when he wrote—

> Hys *table dormant* in hys halle alway
> Stood redy covered al the longé day.

In importance secondary only to the seats on the daïs of the Middle Ages were the

CUPBOARDS, CREDENCES, AND ALMERIES

Until the fifteenth century the *dressieur* form of cupboard, in vogue upon the Continent and probably based upon the credence, reigned also in many an English hall, displaying plate upon its tiered shelving. It subsequently grew to such a height that steps were provided to enable the servant to reach the top shelves. The works of the gold and silver-smiths were, it must be confessed, more valued than those of the woodworker, jewellery and plate being



GOTHIC CREDENCE. VIOLLET-LE-DUC.

PLATE VIII

THE "KING'S ROOM," OXBURGH HALL, NORFOLK

The Property of
Sir HENRY PASTON BEDINGFIELD.

With its furniture and accessories re-arranged to show its Court Cupboard, "Thrown" Chair, Linenfold Panelling, Bedstead, and other appointments

THE old brick mansion of Oxburgh Hall is a picture appealing to the artist-lover of our stately English homes, whether it be seen in the summer twilight when the lights begin to gleam from its many latticed windows; when the snow falls on turf and towers; or the wind drives the autumn fleets of leaves down its broad moat.

The King's room is a spaciously primitive chamber, dating its title from the visit of King Henry VII. to Oxburgh. Although one of the upper apartments, its floors are of yellow bricks, giving it to modern eyes a discomforting aspect. The furniture is of oak; the bed, coverlet, and curtains being embroidered with curious devices of birds, beasts, and fishes, thoughtfully provided with labels such as "A Delphine," "A Leparde," "A Frogge," "A Daker Hen," "A Swalloe," by the modest artists to assist recognition. These embroideries are stated to have been jointly worked by Mary, Queen of Scots, and that feminine builder of great houses, Bess of Hardwicke, Countess of Shrewsbury, who was one of Mary's custodians. This somewhat enforced collaboration is claimed also for several pieces of needlework, in fine silks and gold thread, upon farthingale and other chairs, at Hardwicke Hall.

The court cupboard, dating probably from the commencement of the sixteenth century,—though its super-imposed parts are char-

acteristic of a somewhat earlier date,—bears evidence of the arbitrary blend of Gothic and Renaissance details; the diapered posts with crocketed finials, reminding one of French *Credences* such as that at the Chateau de Pau, and of the *Dressoir* in the Hôtel de Cluny, illustrated in our Colour Plate No. 6. The base of the cupboard has been restored, and the panels are, one fancies, more akin to the work of a continental than of an English carver.

The turned chair is of a pattern originally Byzantine, but introduced into England upon their return by crusading Norman knights, and soldiers of the Varangian Guard. It is of somewhat later date than that sketched upon page 49, but the type continued to be made, with larger seats, until the beginning of the seventeenth century.

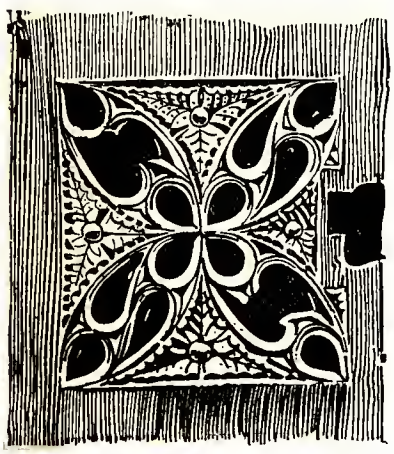
Not only the principal pieces of furniture shown in Colour Plate, but all the accessories illustrated — from the fifteenth-century linen-panelling upon the walls to the tapestries behind the Court Cupboard —are part and parcel of the appointments of this singularly interesting apartment.

easily portable valuables, and more readily convertible into wealth at times of stress.

CARVED OAK PANEL. FRENCH. FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

The cupboard was originally the cup-board, *i.e.* a "board" upon which to place "cups." Its open shelves were afterwards enclosed by doors to form a cupboard, in the present-day application of the term to any space in furniture enclosed by a door. The reason for enclosing was largely to guard against the theft of victuals by the servants, whose duty it was to distribute the remains of each meal to the poor; for as long as "trenchers" were not always plates, but thick rounds of bread, there were considerable remains from each meal to place in this "almery" cupboard, which then became a *gardeviance*, and afterwards, when the food doles fell into disuse, was employed as a *gardevin*. The cellaret of the modern sideboard is thus a descendant of the "gardeviance" of the fifteenth century.

The earliest existing forms of cupboards in England were for the church; they are consequently distinctly Gothic in style and usually embattled. Having been painted probably with "popish pictures" in similar fashion to those abroad, they have usually fallen victims of the iconoclast of the Reformation, or his Cromwellian prototype.



PART OF OAK DOOR, PROBABLY FROM A CUPBOARD OR CREDENCE.

Much ink has been spent over the vexed questions of the origins, functions, and relations of the various forms of cupboard. The writer longs to join in the fray, and indeed has composed, and destroyed, a most excellent soporific on the subject, but will refrain from presenting more than the irreducible minimum necessary to understand the differences between these important pieces.

Upon the domestication of decorative furniture, ecclesiastical types such as the credence and the almery were adopted generally in the home; and when the Renaissance arrived its ornament was crudely grafted upon the Gothic construction of these pieces. By a curious twist of fate some of these secularised examples, such as that at Minehead, Sudbury's Hutch, and the somewhat later Muniment Chest at St. Saviour's, Southwark (shown in Colour Plate No. 8), are now found in churches, having been probably placed there for safe custody by their original owners.

GOTHIC THREE-TIER DRESSER.

A simple domestic variant of the cupboard, entirely enclosed by a door and broad pilasters, and owing only its perforated Gothic tracery to church inspiration, was used for food storage. It was the custom to attach coloured cloth behind this tracery, in order that the air might enter whilst the dust was kept out. One cannot forbear to notice a curious dust-collecting device upon several lock-plates fixed upon fifteenth and sixteenth century cupboards; it consists of a V-shaped, flanged piece, in the centre of which was placed the keyhole; the most probable reason for its popularity being that it assisted the solution of a difficulty not apparently restricted to modern times, that of "finding the keyhole." Its disuse may have been due to the representations of some mediæval guild of *jongleurs* or comic artists anxious to hand down an unfailing font of humour to successors. This theory is confirmed by some continental lock-plates bearing crescent moons in the place of the V-shaped piece.

PLATE IX

OAK PRESS, STRANGERS' HALL, NORWICH

WALL FRESCO PAINTING, WEST STOWE
Circa 1550

Length, 5 ft. 9 in.; height, 7 ft. 6 in.

EVELYN and Macaulay have laid such stress upon the prosperous splendour of Norwich during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, that one is somewhat disappointed not to find many such woodwork relics as the oak Armoire or Press, now preserved by the local Archæological Society in the curious old Merchant's house known as Strangers' Hall, parts of which date from the fourteenth century.

More than usual divergence of opinion legitimately exists upon the period of this piece, which is in one of the upper rooms, reached by an oak Tudor stairway. But it was probably the middle of the sixteenth century which witnessed the Flemish craftsmen, who had settled in considerable numbers in East Anglia, and are credited with the work, either making it entirely in the room in which it still stands or putting it together in the room, since its proportions are too large for its entering intact through the present door; its height being 7 feet 6 inches and its width 5 feet 9 inches.

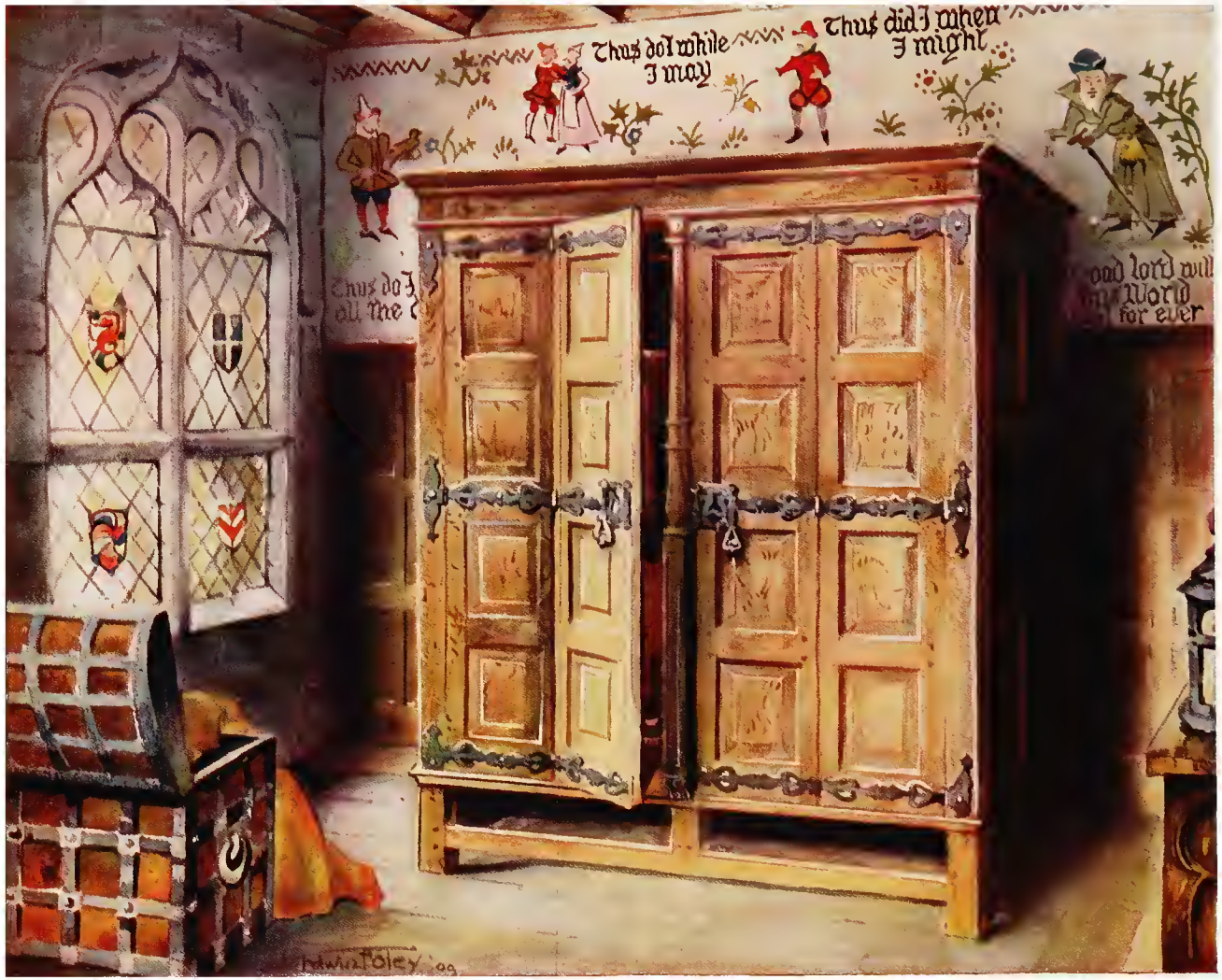
The division and hingeing of each door in the centre is a convenient device, which might well be adopted more frequently in furniture nowadays: the inside fittings consist of three thick shelves. Owing in all probability largely to the surface not having been fed or protected by oil or wax, portions of the woodwork, especially at the corners of the panels, have "crumbled" and bleached.

The ornamental hinges are such as we find were imported by the Hanseatic League in the reign of Henry VIII., but it must be

remembered that the ironwork upon a piece is often misleading, being frequently of earlier date as regards style than the woodwork: owing probably to stock patterns being used up, or to local smiths lagging somewhat behind in matters of pattern. A similar hinge is to be seen upon a door, otherwise of earlier seventeenth-century detail, at South Kensington. The details of the window are similar to some in the Strangers' Hall. We discover at least one argument in favour of the good old days, when we learn that at this period the Strangers' Hall paid rates amounting annually to threepence.

The ill-used adjective "quaint" may, with more accuracy than usual, be applied to the figures of the wall-fresco painting of contemporary date, conserved until recently behind old panelling at West Stowe, in what is now part of a farmhouse, but was once the palace hall of Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, brother-in-law of Henry VIII. and grandfather of Lady Jane Grey. The Elizabethan dandy with falcon (?) on wrist is labelled, "Thus doe I all the day"; the lovers are inscribed, "Thus do I while I may." The next figure, presumably an older but not wiser man, regretfully remarks, "Thus did I when I might"; whilst the old sage (whose proportions, however, have not shrunk with age, but the contrary) reflects per label, "Good Lord, will this world last for ever." The naïve indication of age conveyed by the bent frame of this ancient, recalls the reply of another old Suffolk worthy to an inquiry concerning his health, "I'm well enow; but me faculties is failing, 'specially me legs."

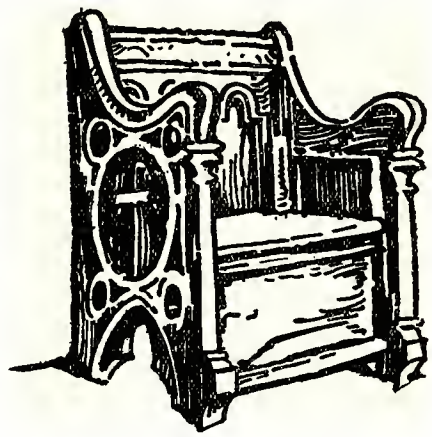
Simon Memmi of Siena is credited in the *Percy Anecdotes* with the invention of such explanatory labels for his figures: one of his pictures, depicting the devil, faint from severe pursuit of a saint, having inscribed upon it, "*Ohime! Ohime! Non posso piu!*—Oh! Oh! it's all over with me!"


Thus do I while I may
Thus did I when I might
Thus do I all the
oad lord will
World
for ever

In the succeeding Tudor days we shall find greater variety and fuller references to the predecessors of the sideboard.

CHAIRS, STOOLS, AND BENCHES

Benches (*bancs*) and stools, the most common seats during late Gothic times, were almost entirely utilitarian. Joint stools, nowadays popularly supposed to have been made exclusively for supporting coffins, were used at the ends of the tables, and, instead of the heavy benches, in the scarcity of chairs.



THE DUNMOW CHAIR.

Many surviving chairs of the Gothic periods were obviously parts originally of Choir Stalls. One of these is the extremely interesting example used to "chair" applicants for the Dunmow flitch of bacon, who emerged successfully from a mock trial; having proved to the satisfaction of "the court" that never since they had become

"THROWN" (*i.e.* TURNED) CHAIR.

> Married man and wife,
> By household broils or contentious strife,
> Or otherwise at bed or board,
> Had they offended each other in word or in deed.

The Dunmow custom was instituted in the days of Henry III.; the chair being thirteenth-century Gothic, and probably made from some choir stalls belonging to the convent from which Dunmow Church was evolved.

Chairs retained much of their stall-like character, being enclosed (*closé*) and having lockers under, of which the seat formed the lid. The X-shaped or *curule* form, a descendant

The latter part of the fifteenth century witnessed the termination of monastic rule in matters of furnishing. Tapestried hangings and wainscoting were more frequently applied to the walls; halls were provided with screens; glass was in greater use for windows, which were also enlarged and recessed; chimneys were constructed more generally; attention was even paid to the condition of the floors. The dawn of domestic comfort and luxury had come to England.

THE TUDOR–RENAISSANCE PERIOD IN BRITISH DECORATIVE FURNITURE[1]

(TUDOR-ELIZABETHAN: 1509–1603)

AS the Renaissance inspiration practically commenced with the rule of Henry VIII., and was continuous in growth until the close of Elizabeth's reign, our best course appears to be to group the whole period under the above heading.

The term Tudor in woodwork is frequently restricted to that first part of the momentous period, 1509–1603, comprised in the reign of the eighth Henry; whilst the title Elizabethan, though usually confined to the reign of the Virgin Queen, is at times vaguely extended to embrace the work during the days of the preceding Tudor monarchs, when distinctly "Romayne" or Renaissance details are employed.

The typical Englishman, if asked which era in his country's history he regards with most pride and pleasure, would probably choose the Tudor. Certainly few, if any, historical periods can compare in romantic interest with the days of King Hal and Queen Bess, during which the domestic hearth acquired the sanctities, comforts, and refinements embodied in the word Home.

The formative arts in preceding periods of British history are but remote and conjectural, but from the period of Henry VIII. accurate data supplant surmise, and actual examples exist in suffi-

[1] *The Charts of British Styles in Part I. and of Accessories in Part XII., together with the Chapters on various pieces and phases of decorative furniture, will be found of interest and value in the study of the period.*

cient numbers to make the problem of the chronicler and artist rather what to omit than what to insert.

THE RENAISSANCE IN ENGLAND

We have seen that decorative furniture during mediæval times was, in England, as abroad, confined to the church, the castle, and the monastery, but that the balance of power was gradually being transferred from the sword of the noble to the well-filled coffer of the burgess; with the result that luxury, even comfort, were no longer exclusive privileges of the monk and the baron, but were spreading among the citizens and the nation generally.

Unheeded by Britain, engrossed in civil strife, for more than a century an inspiritive movement had been gathering force, and affecting the entire range of mental concepts so profoundly that the term Renaissance (from its analogy to mental rebirth) in no way exaggerates its influence upon the Western European races; since it was not only a rebirth, but a development ultimately giving intellectual freedom from the torpor and tyranny of mediæval clericalism.

Arising in Italy from the study of classic ideals and forms in art and government, the movement spread over France, Germany, Spain, the Netherlands, and the first faint manifestations of its art expression in England occur about the year 1487, in the interesting old piece known as Vicar Sudbury's Hutch, which we have included in the review of the preceding Late Gothic period.

Though it is with the changes in decorative furniture arising out of the enlarged outlook of the Italian Renaissance that we are concerned, it is interesting to note that in England expansion of thought evidenced itself in a desire to break away from the mental outlook enjoined by the Romish Church, as far back as Wycliff's time (1377 A.D.), long ere the Germans, led by Martin Luther in 1517, manifested the same tendency.

When the arts of the Renaissance, flowing from their source in Italy to France, Germany, Spain, and the Netherlands, finally came to this country, they reached a land which, if we except the furnishings imported for the use of the wealthy Romans during their occupation of Britain, had never seen the classic arts.

Owing in part to the deep-rooted love of the perpendicular line which dominates Gothic work, and is so opposed to the horizontal line prevailing in Classic architecture, and in part also to the technically inferior condition of the artistic crafts in England, the use of the details of the Italian Renaissance, in combination with native Gothic forms, affected the conceptions of structural design but slowly.

HENRY THE EIGHTH AND THE RENAISSANCE

The art of the Renaissance found in Henry VIII. an admirer and patron, especially after his visit to Francis I. upon the magnificent Field of the Cloth of Gold,—that textile city of a day, yet costly as though built of marble. Left by his shrewd but greedy and suspicious father the heritage of undisputed succession and of enormous wealth, Henry showed during the first years of his reign a careless joyousness which found speedy response in his subjects. Young, brave, strong, and of imposing presence, not only was he accomplished in manly sports, but also in the arts of Italy and the new learning as interpreted by More and Colet.

ITALIAN DESIGNERS IN ENGLAND

Anxious to transplant the glories of the Renaissance to the English shores, the monument in Westminster Abbey to his father offered fitting opportunity, and, setting aside the Gothic designs prepared, he invited many Italian artists to this country, and entrusted the

scheme to the Florentine Pietro Torrigiano. Torrigiano will perhaps owe immortality to his rival braggart Cellini mentioning him as boasting of having broken Michael Angelo's nose, and of his valiant feats among "those bears of Englishmen." He, Rovezzano, Toto del Nunziata, John of Padua, and Holbein, were the most distinguished of the many versatile foreign artists who were induced to visit the English shores. Holbein was not only a painter and "architect" but a designer of furniture, and John of Padua not only an "architect" but a musician.

ELIZABETHAN "ARCHITECTS"

It may be well to emphasise here that, though for convenience one speaks of "architects" of the Tudor era, the architect in the modern sense did not exist until much later times, even in name. His nearest equivalent in title was that of John Thorpe, "Devizor of the King's Buildings." A plan and rough idea of the suggested appearance rather than a drawing was prepared by a surveyor, and given to the masons, bricklayers, and other workers; as far as we can judge, these artizans settled upon the precise ornamental and other details of their work. Much more appears to have been left to the workman's taste and knowledge of the traditions and current methods of his craft than is now the custom, though another element making for individuality occurred, through the owner of the building frequently taking a much more active part in its design and construction than is usual in our times.

THE RENAISSANCE SCREEN AND CHOIR STALLS AT CAMBRIDGE,

Executed during Henry VIII.'s reign, display so much dignity and delicacy, and are so indisputably the finest works of the period in

PLATE X

THE PANELLED STUDY AT GROOMBRIDGE PLACE, KENT

By permission of the Misses Saint.

Not so large as Penshurst, Knole, Leeds Castle, or other of the treasure houses in Kent, Groombridge Place has an individuality and past history of equal interest; in large measure owing to the fact that its owner, during Henry v.'s French Wars, was Sir Richard Waller, who not only took the Duke of Orleans prisoner at Agincourt, and held him captive at Groombridge for twenty years; but had in similar charge there, shortly after, the Duke's brother, the Count d'Angoulême.

The central carved panels over the mantel, which contain the Orleans and the Waller arms, are among the many ornamental details one finds at Groombridge, reminiscent of the enforced stay of these French princes.

Evelyn mentions Groombridge; indeed, it was during his time that the house was rebuilt upon the old site, its moat being retained, and the panelling and other fittings of the study, in common with that in other apartments, re-erected in its present position. The vertical lines of the linenfold pattern form such excellent foils for the distinctly Renaissance scroll-carving of the horizontal panels as to silence the purists who object to transitional work.

The details of the cocksheaded S-shaped scrolls, as well as the repetition of the depressed line of the stonework arch by the woodwork above, are curiously similar to the woodwork mantel in the withdrawing room at Brenchley Parsonage House, which also is wainscoted with linenfold panelling of early sixteenth-century date.

design and workmanship that, though of an ecclesiastical character, one cannot ignore them. Fuller says of the Screen and Choir Stalls, erected between 1531 and 1535 in King's College Chapel, Cambridge, "the stonework and woodwork contend which shall the most deserve admiration." Their purely Italian character is so unmistakable as to leave no doubt that both screen and stalls were the work of foreign artists and craftsmen (Sir Digby Wyatt attributes the design to Holbein), and not representative of either native design or craftsmanship. Indeed, in typical and native work until practically the conclusion of Elizabeth's reign, the Renaissance details were used by Englishmen, rather for the sake of grafting upon the native construction than with any view of utilising either the Italian construction or the classic spirit. This is evident even in works of the imported Italians and their native *en bloc* copyists, such as the Christchurch Abbey Stalls and the fine woodwork at the Vine, Basingstoke, in Hampshire, which show further stages in the blending of Italian neo-Classic detail with the indigenous Gothic.

OAK DRAUGHT CHAIR, OR GUÉRITE.

NONESUCH CHESTS

It is a curious commentary on Henry's masterpiece in building, that the wondrous Palace of Nonesuch owes the handing-down of its outlines largely to their being pictured in inlay on the pieces of decorative furniture known as Nonesuch Chests. One of these is illustrated in Colour Plate No. 13, with a summary of the chequered history of this royal palace, which was built at Cheam about 1541, chiefly from the designs of foreign artists; since it is recorded that the King procured "excellent artificers, sculptors, and statuaries, as

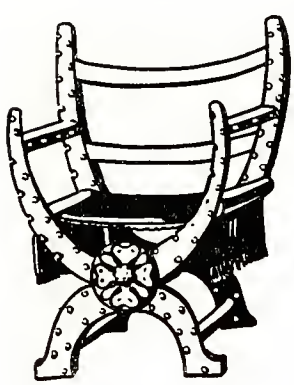
well Italian, French, and Dutch as native." Toto del Nunziata appears to have been the principal designer of Nonesuch Palace. Evelyn vouches for its beauty and variety of the building, one of whose chief glories was a room panelled in deal, then valued in this country as a much more unusual wood than oak.

During Henry VIII.'s reign the treatment of Italian ornament adopted in England, was largely akin to that in the contemporary interpretations of the Renaissance prevailing in France under his brother monarch, Francis the First.

Henry VIII., throughout the troubled times which followed the many developments of his uncurbed egotism, remained faithful to his encouragement of the arts. At his death the Italian and other foreign artists and craftsmen departed. They had never acquired much popularity, being suspected of "heathenish" ways. One of the first to arrive, indeed, was always known by the name of "Pageny."

EDWARD THE SIXTH AND MARY

Edward VI.'s reign was but nominal, whilst Queen Mary, poor woman, had little use for wood in her Rome-ruled, husband-deserted life, save for faggots at Smithfield. One relic of her melancholy marriage with Philip of Spain is preserved in Winchester Cathedral—the X shaped chair used at the ceremony.



QUEEN MARY'S WEDDING CHAIR.

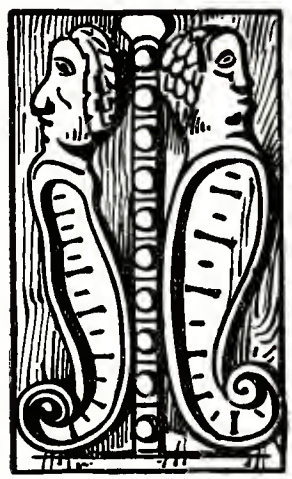
Harrison, in his much-quoted but curiously little-read account of the England of his days, gives the words of a Spaniard in Queen Mary's time, who reports of the poorer people's homes in some parts of the country, that "their houses are made of sticks and dirt, but they fare commonly as well as the king." Harrison's commentary on this is, "Whereof it appeareth that he liked better of our good fare in such coarse

cabins, than of their own diet in their prince-like habitations and palaces."

A TUDOR INVENTORY

An interesting inventory of the Tudor Mary's times tabulates, among the appointments of an evidently well-furnished *privee* parlour, "one jointed bedstead covered with a counterpoint of emigrie works with cortayns of greene and red serge," "long damaske sylke chussings," "one table, one joined forme," "trussels," "thrown chayres," "joined stools," "one great payre of andirons," and "one Flanders chest"; whilst in other lists as late as the end of the sixteenth century, we find bedsteads, still apparently usual items in parlour equipments.

BEFORE MARRIAGE. OAK CARVING IN SPROTBROUGH CHURCH.

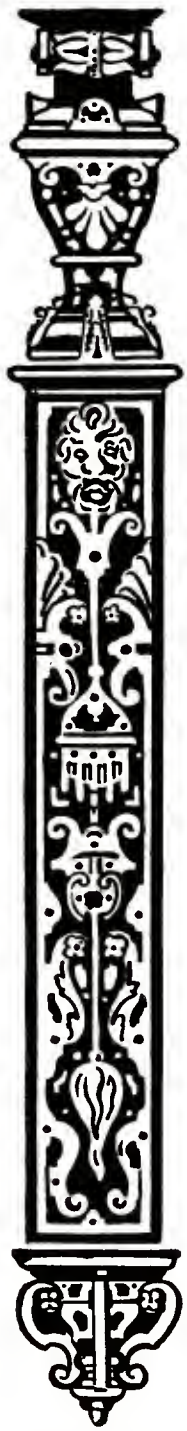


AFTER MARRIAGE. OAK CARVING IN SPROTBROUGH CHURCH.

ELIZABETH

The Catholic reaction in Mary's reign was but an interlude, and great were the rejoicings when the daughter of Anne Boleyn was crowned to commence that long, romantic, unparalleled reign, which has inspired the abler pens of so many Englishmen. The younger sister was destined to defy successfully the power of Rome, to head the conflict between the old faith and the new, and to avenge Philip of Spain's marriage of Mary for policy, and his desertion through dislike.

An age so virile, receptive, and colour-loving as that of Raleigh, Drake, and Howard of Effingham, naturally sought vigorously to



NEWEL AT ASTON HALL.

express its temperament in its domestic *penates.* We consequently find the reign of Queen Elizabeth almost as remarkable in architecture, and its allied arts of decorative furniture, as in poetry or politics. Freedom from civil war caused security against foes, hitherto the main object of the building, to be superseded by the study of dignity and comfort, and the rivalry of the sword was superseded by friendly emulation in building and equipping the home The development of the family life is involved in the development of the home. It was now practicable to concede the rights of womanhood and childhood to a higher standard of comfort and privacy.

Much improvement in the condition of the people had doubtless been effected by the abolition of feudalism and other reforms, but the most uncompromising advocate of the "good old times" would not venture to call the state of England entirely satisfactory, in face of the fact that during Henry VIII.'s reign some two thousand people were hung annually for theft alone. Though under Elizabeth that number was quickly reduced to four hundred, the figures show that Sir Henry Wotton was uttering an *a propos* aphorism when declaring that "hanging was the worst use one could put a man to," a phrase as incisively ambiguous as his better-known *bon mot,* "an ambassador is an honest man sent to lie abroad for his country" which grieved the "wisest fool" in Christendom so much, from its author being His Majesty's ambassador at Venice,—whence by the way he constantly sent home choice examples of the arts of the republic of the seas. This same Sir Henry Wotton was an agreeable and noble figure in the later Elizabethan band of versatile, scholarly statesmen; in his *Elements*

PILASTER FROM OAK PANELLING FORMERLY IN A HOUSE AT EXETER.

of Architecture, published in 1624, he summarises with equal felicity the views upon building which prevailed in his days, declaring that "Every Man's proper Mansion-house and home being the Theatre of his Hospitality, the Seate of his Selfe-fruition, the Comfortablest part of his own life; the noblest of his Son's Inheritance; a kind of Private Princedom: may well deserve by these Attributes, according to the degree of the Master, to be Delightfully Adorned."

FOREIGN INFLUENCE ON ELIZABETHAN WOODWORK

The distinctive developments of decorative furniture which "delightfully adorned" the interior of the Elizabethan home were assisted by the arrival of Flemings and Germans. With their aid, and under the sobering influence of a growing English conception of a national interpretation of the new style, such truly proper mansion-houses and homes as Burghley and Charlecote, were built in designs far more congenial to the national temperament and needs than would have been the purer classic works of imported Italians —who in Clough's words

> Loved not fancies just betrayed,
> And artful tricks of light and shade,
> But pure form nakedly displayed,
> And all things absolutely made.

Though the Renaissance detail was em-

PILASTER FROM OAK PANELLING FORMERLY IN A HOUSE AT EXETER.

PILASTER FROM OAK PANELLING FORMERLY IN A HOUSE AT EXETER.

ployed during the days of Elizabeth, the treatment was entirely different from that of Italy, and continued to be so until the works of Inigo Jones forced upon England, in Stuart days, a recognition of the beauty of purer classic work.

That Italian visitors to this country did not regard the Elizabethan building as a satisfactory interpretation of their Renaissance is shown by the criticism of Prince Cosmo in 1669. Speaking of Audley End, a typical example of the Tudor style, he says: "The architecture of the place, though it was built but sixty years ago, is nevertheless not regular, but inclines to the Gothic, mixed with a little of the Doric and Ionic."

In tracing the evolution of the cabinet-maker's art it would be futile to attempt to ignore the indebtedness, until the eighteenth century, of decorative woodwork to contemporary architecture for form and ornament. Fortunately, pieces of Tudor Renaissance decorative woodwork have survived to these days in greater numbers than have Late Gothic examples, whilst the contemporary chronicles assist us greatly in understanding the equipment of the Tudor home. Though more plentiful than during the preceding period, furniture was still scarce, compared with the crowded rooms of the present day; an amount of floor space was consequently left, of much value artistically.

PILASTER FROM OAK PANELLING FORMERLY IN A HOUSE AT EXETER.

PLATE XI

THE LITTLECOTE BEDSTEAD

The Property of
VINCENT ROBINSON, ESQUIRE, F.S.A.,
Parnham, Dorset

Height, 7 ft. 11 ins.; width, 6 ft.; depth, 8 ft.
(Cornice sizes)

FINE as is this example of the Tudor four-poster, from a decorative standpoint, it derives much additional interest from having been formerly in the "Haunted Room" at Littlecote Hall in which was committed the murder recounted by the following narrative, endorsed by Sir Walter Scott, Aubrey the historian, and the records of the Popham family.

An old village nurse, dozing by her cottage fire, was awakened at midnight and commanded to attend upon a lady of high rank; blindfolded and seated upon a pillion, she rode behind the messenger across country, until the clattering of the horse's hoofs told her that they had entered a courtyard.

She was hurried to a room containing a four-post bed upon which lay a masked lady. Her midwifery services were no sooner performed than "a man of ferocious aspect" tore the new-born boy from her, and, stabbing it to the heart, flung its body upon a fire blazing in the ante-chamber, heedless of the shrieks of the women.

Blindfolded, the nurse was conducted home and rewarded with twenty-five guineas; but, as the old tale puts it, "she knew no peace until she had laid bare" the events of the night to a magistrate.

Suspicion at once fell upon Wild Darrel of Littlecote, as the midwife had not only counted the stairs, but, unobserved, had snipped out a piece of the blue bedhangings, which was found to tally

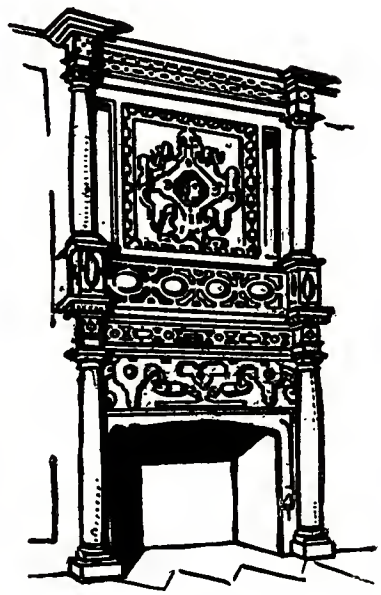
with that in the room now known as the "Haunted Bedroom." Local tradition tallies with Aubrey's version that Darrel "was brought to his tryall" before Judge Popham, "and, to be short, this judge had this noble house, parks, and manor . . . for a bribe to save his life."

Unfortunately for the credibility of the tale, Sir John Popham, whose descendants own Littlecote to this day, was not made a judge until after the trial, and although the estates afterwards became his property, he may well have earned them in a more legitimate manner, being Darrel's legal adviser. He it was (to continue a pardonable diversion from the legitimate paths of decorative furniture) who tried Sir Walter Raleigh and Guy Fawkes, and, as Speaker of the House of Commons, replied to Queen Elizabeth's query, "What hath passed in the Commons House?" "If it please your Majesty, seven weeks."

The author cannot aver his personal cognisance of either the spectral mother in her long night robe bitterly bewailing her child in the haunted room; nor of that other apparition, — the Wild Huntsman, the last of the Darrels and the reputed murderer of the child, — dashing through the glades of Littlecote; which also lingers in local legends.

Edwin Foley

PANELLING AND TAPESTRY



CHIMNEY-PIECE, OLD DINING-ROOM. MONTACUTE HOUSE.

The chief rooms were oak-panelled or hung with tapestry, with a frieze and ceiling above of moulded plaster; the chimney-piece usually was the dominating feature of the room, being carried up to the ceiling, whilst the bay windows were frequently continued to the roof.

Towards the delightful adornment of the Tudor home, with its long galleries and deeply recessed bay windows, beautiful woodwork was the main contributor, both in the actual furniture and in the wall panelling, which forms so peculiarly fitting an environment for the equipments of the Tudor periods.

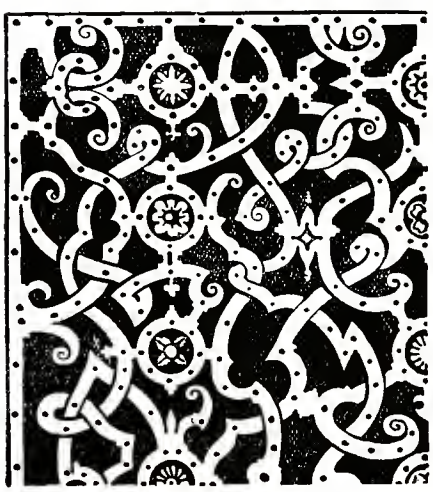
The four carved pilasters of the panelling, forming the background of the Muniment Chest shown in Colour Plate No. 8, represent a somewhat stricter adherence to Italian conceptions, than was usual on the part of either the English or of the Flemish craftsman, who probably carved these pilasters at the end of the sixteenth or the commencement of the seventeenth century.

Is it too frivolous to point out that had Hamlet's mother's apartment been panelled, instead of being hung with arras, the unfortunate eavesdropping which resulted in the death of Polonius might never have been, and Hamlet, guiltless of the blood of Ophelia's father, might have overcome his revengeful feelings, married Ophelia amid the orthodox accompaniments of wedding bells and orange blossom? Whether this be regarded as a preferable conclusion to that chosen by the dramatist, depends upon the intensity of the reader's love of the happy ending.

THE TAPISER AND UPHOLDER

In large houses a servant was kept whose special duty it was to attend to arras cloths and other tapestries. He was called the *upholder*, being the descendant of the *tapiser*, and the ancestor of the upholsterer.

The constant references by Elizabethan poets, evidence the importance and the beauty of old textile hangings, in the decoration of the home of other days. Spenser tells us that "The rooms of Castle Joyous were roundabout apparalled with costly cloths of Arras and of Tours"; Shakespeare, that Imogen's bed-chamber was "hanged with tapestry of silk and silver," and that Sir John Falstaff had his pockets rifled at the inn, when he fell asleep behind the arras.



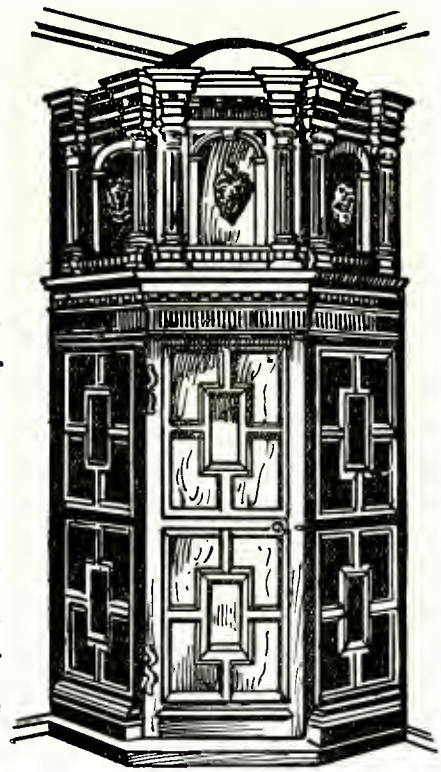
STRAPWORK, AUDLEY END.

Fine examples of needlecraft and loom-work have survived, yet none equalling in realism that mentioned by the Duke of Würtemburg's secretary in 1592, in a description of the tapestried hall at Theobalds, which, if one may credit his narrative, was decorated with trees bearing birds'-nests and fruit so convincingly pictured that "when the steward opened the windows the birds flew in, perched upon the trees and began to sing,"—possibly in delirium at the unusual conjunction of the seasons shown by the nests and fruit!

Inlay, which was, as will be seen, much in favour after Elizabeth's accession for decorative furniture, was at times also used with delightful effect for the enrichment of panelling, as in the apartment from Sizergh Castle, Westmoreland, now to be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

INTERNAL PORCHES

In the Sizergh Castle room is also one of those picturesque Tudor-Renaissance internal porches, which project into the apartment and form three sides of an octagon with the door occupying the centre. They were of Continental origin—probably Flemish. Similar porches are to be seen at the Red House, Bristol, Bradfield, and some mansions in Devonshire. At Broughton Castle is a fine example, bearing a carved motto which may be translated: "Of what used to be, the memory pleases but little." There is some difference of opinion whether one should regard this as an expression of regret for a former owner's activity in the civil dissensions of his times, or of preference for this doorway over its predecessor; which may too literally have fulfilled the old definition of a healthful door as one "a dog could creep under the bottom of, and a fowl fly over the top."



DOORWAY AND PANELLING, SIZERGH CASTLE. SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM.

Had the days of Elizabeth and James merely brought forth the fine staircases of easy tread, stoutly timbered newels, and balusters carved with many a quaint device, they would have earned a niche in the temple of the formative arts.

In decorative woodwork the pointed arch survived during the reign of Henry VIII. and even into Mary's reign, when the round arch was employed.

TUDOR-RENAISSANCE DETAILS

Dolphins (the device of the Dauphin) were used in England after Francis I. and Henry VIII. met at the Field of the Cloth of Gold, as a symbol of the early sixteenth-century *entente cordiale;* the *Guilloche* being another favoured adaptation from Continental sources.

THE DOLPHIN FROM FRENCH KINGS' SHIELDS.

The carving upon Elizabethan woodwork is rough but vigorous. The linen pattern was little used, strap-work and arabesques taking its place upon the friezes and pilasters, whilst fruit and flowers were combined with a grotesque treatment (intentional or unintentional) of human and animal forms.

GUILLOCHE.

The Elizabethan strap-carving introduced from the Low Countries —in common with most of the details used during the Elizabethan interpretation of the Renaissance—is usually interesting in its distinctly English modification of foreign ornament.

EARLY "ROMAYNE WORK," FROM AN OLD HOUSE AT WALTHAM.

An explanation of the finer technical finish seen at times in the carving of old pieces is, that it may often have been convenient to employ native craftsmen for cabinet-making, and a foreign carver for its enrichment.

EARLY "ROMAYNE WORK" FROM AN OLD HOUSE AT WALTHAM.

ROMAYNE WORK

The typical characteristic early Tudor ornament, of heads in medallions known as "romayne" work continued to be used, more or less, throughout the period. English carvers were, however, more indebted to the German "pattern book" of designs. So far from being of modern invention, these books are quite of ancient lineage: the Germans published the weird grotesques of the De Vries and Wendel Dietterlin,—the latter a veritable Poe in German ornament, who greatly needed the curb which was applied by the sober Elizabethan craftsmen.

ELIZABETHAN GROTESQUES

Teutonic versions, painful to the severe classicist, of the Erechtheum and other beautiful Greek *caryatidæ*, were the probable sources of the pedestal pilasters, capped by human busts or bodies, supposedly representing some heathen gods or goddesses, which supplanted the angels and saints of pre-Renaissance days.

EARLY "ROMAYNE WORK," FROM AN OLD HOUSE AT WALTHAM.

"S" SCROLL STRAPWORK, FROM WOOD PILASTER, SOUTH WRAXALL.

Painting and gilding decorative furniture fell into disuse soon after Henry VIII.'s accession to the throne; but the hereditary English love of colour could not remain entirely satisfied with a scheme in which furniture and background were of the same hue, and from about the middle of the century a growing partiality for

INLAID WORK

Is traceable. Holly, ebony, pear, yew, cherry, and other woods, contrasting with the oak framework were freely employed both upon furniture such as the Offley Chest in Southwark Cathedral, shown in Colour Plate No. 8, and the remarkable table made for "Building Bess" of Hardwicke, to commemorate her marriage to her fourth husband, the Earl of Shrewsbury in 1568, and the marriage of her son and daughter with a daughter and son of the Earl of Shrewsbury. Lutes, rebecks, viols, cyterrnes, sackbuts, nude figures, the arms of the Talbots, Cavendishs, and Hardwickes, strapwork, etc., are but some of the many forms depicted in coloured woods upon this interesting table.

FOUR PANELS OF "ROMAYNE WORK" REPRESENTING TWO WOMEN IN COIFFED HEAD-DRESSES, AND TWO MERCHANTS WEARING LOOPED-UP BIRETTAS, FURRED AMICES, AND SHORT RUFFS. FROM CARVED OAK PANELLING OF TUDOR PERIOD DISCOVERED IN AN OLD HOUSE IN THE HIGH STREET, SALISBURY, OCCUPIED BY MR. FRED. SUTTON.

A greater use of Renaissance constructional features is very observable in decorative furniture of this more elaborate type.

TUDOR JOKERS IN WOOD

The humorist of the pre-Punch period, denied the wide publicity of the modern press, would at times perpetrate his conceits in the

PLATE XII

CARVED AND INLAID OAK COURT CUPBOARD

The Property of Mrs. Henry Branston,
The Friary, Newark

Length, 6 ft. 3 in.; height, 6 ft. 1 in.;
depth, 2 ft. 1 in.

Though bearing the date 1605, and thus—to be chronologically exact—just on the Stuart side of the style-boundary, this cupboard is, save in this respect and in its twist-turned posts, so typical of the Late Tudor period, that its inclusion thereunder needs little apology.

The craftsmanship shown in the construction is evidence of the technical improvement which English joinery by the end of Elizabeth's reign exhibits; not a joint has given. The doors are rule-jointed, *i.e.* rounded at their junctions with the end posts, which are hollowed out for their reception.

The stringing and other inlays are of box and holly (slightly stained, one is inclined to think, when the piece was made), the black wood is not ebony, but is also stained in imitation of that wood, as are the turned posts: a comforting precedent for almost all-sham modern days.

The oak is of exceptionally rich shade; no wood being more responsive in colour variations to the vicissitudes of its existence.

1603
RMM

more enduring materials of wood and stone. He often availed himself of the opportunity of a play upon his client's name, such as a carved barrel or tun fastened to a wall: a rebus requiring no prodigious mental effort to decipher as *Walton*; whilst the tun, if lengthened, as easily reads for *Langton*—as in Bishop Langton's Chantry at Winchester; the addition of the domestic fowl transforming the carved jest into *Henton*. The same elementary humour caused the Gothic workmen to represent the effigies of their spiritual teachers and craft rivals, the monks, in unseemly attitudes and with absurd accessories on corbels and *misereres*! indeed, the mixture of a simplicity almost childish, with wealth of conception, elevated and vivifying thought, is equally apparent in building and furniture until the Commonwealth. Mansions were erected whose plans were based upon their owner's initials, or the letters H and E, the latter in compliment to their Virgin Queen. John Thorpe, the Elizabethan "Devizor" whose drawings form a valuable record of building procedure of the period, did not scruple to add explanatory poetry to his plans:—

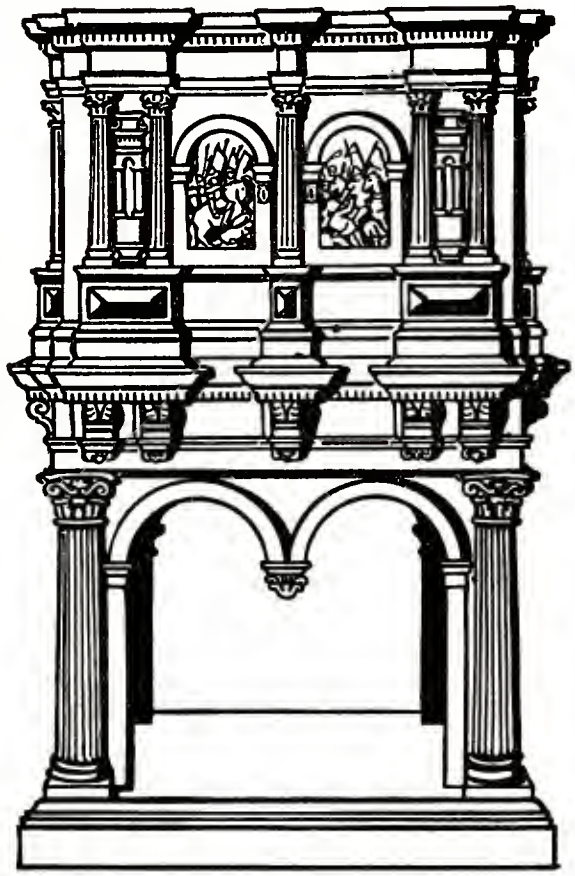
"BUILDING BESS" TABLE.

These two lettere I and T
Joyned together, as you see,
Is ment for a dwelling house for me
John Thorpe.

Queen Elizabeth, on her part, did not deem it beneath her royal dignity to call her great officers of state by such pet names as

"Lyddes," "Moon," "Sheep," "Spirit"; and even the great poet Spenser built the aerial castles in his *Faerie Queen* upon whimsical "quadrates based on three and nine."

The well-preserved and serviceable state of the bulk of surviving old oak furniture is remarkable: it is probably that from the more substantial construction of the earlier styles, at least as large a proportion of examples of those styles has survived, as of the later periods. One cannot but regret, from an insular point of view, that so much really old furniture has made its way across the Atlantic during the last decade or more, in consequence of the old oak collecting hobby so prevalent in the United States; accompanied, one sardonically reflects, by many a semi-antique and wholly modern imitation, sold to innocent American tourists from dust-ridden and apparently guileless "old curiosity" shops in our cathedral and county towns.



INLAID PEARWOOD CABINET OF SIXTEENTH-CENTURY. DESIGN, ATTRIBUTED TO HOLBEIN.

OLD ENGLISH WOODWORK OF THE OAK PERIOD

One cause of the charm of Old English woodwork is its sturdy, simple honesty of construction. The pieces are pegged with wooden pins and innocent of screws. Had the old workmen used screws the rust of three centuries would long ere now have played havoc with

many a fine old piece we still have intact. When examining woodwork of the sixteenth century one is impressed with its sound and substantial condition after daily usage, often of a rough character, for some hundreds of years. After making every allowance for the action of the "survival of the fittest," it seems certain that the simple methods of construction employed by our ancestors might be reverted to with advantage; that glue, French nails, and "halving in" are but poor substitutes, if durability be required, for the well-made mortice and tenon, and the dowel.

In this connection is it too impertinent a divergence into philosophy to ask if æsthetics and ethics may not have more points of contact than are usually accepted? Honesty and truth, or the reverse, in the making and materials of the silent surroundings of the home, surely influence the thoughts of its residents: surely the home which is furnished with pretentious shams and wooden falsehoods reacts maleficently upon the character of its owners.

The work of Tudor times, as the succeeding chapter will further evidence, exhibits such a picturesque, unstilted, and frank adaptation of materials and ornament, to conditions and requirements, that in these less robust days it is singularly attractive.

THE TUDOR-RENAISSANCE PERIOD IN BRITISH DECORATIVE FURNITURE, 1509-1603 (Concluded)

COFFERS AND CUPBOARDS

THAT the terms coffer, armoire, cupboard, credence, *huche*, almery, and buffet are at times employed indifferently and loosely by old and modern writers, when referring to the various forms of storage furniture, which were merging and evolving during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, is scarcely remarkable considering the difficulties of satisfactory definition. It is, however, a source of confusion, and in this work an endeavour has been made to use each term in accordance with the views expressed in the following pages.

The idea of making the movable piece of furniture known as a cupboard, may have originated from the covering-in of a recess in the wall, by placing curtains in front, but the name favours the theory that such pieces were originally open framework, in raised stages of boards, on which cups and plates were placed,—literally cup-boards. Afterwards, when enclosed by doors, the space thus formed was called after the piece of furniture in which they formed part, as court cupboard, livery cupboard, dole and standing cupboards.

ALMERIES, or dole cupboards, were originally lockers in which broken victuals, bread, and other food for doles or alms were placed.

They were usually pierced for the admission of air, and were also frequently employed for domestic storage, especially as the custom of giving doles fell into comparative disuse. The term will recall to Anglo-Indians the *Almirah* of the East.

Livery Cupboards (*Livrer*, to deliver) were, judging from their derivation of name, used for holding food and other requisites for delivery; at times restricted to the servants' allowance or "livery," but also employed for the portions allotted to those who, requiring food between the evening meal at 5 p.m. and the morning meal at 10 a.m. had their "livery" supper of cakes and spiced wine delivered to them each night in their bedrooms. Livery cupboards were less ornamented than the court cupboard. If one accepts the definition supplied by the extant contract for building Hengrave Hall—

Ye cobards they be made ye facyon of lieuery yt is w'tout doors

—the livery cupboard was an open shelved piece of furniture of the simplest modern dinner wagon type. In old country farms and cottages, fortunate enough to still retain and value these relics of bygone days, they are known as bread and cheese cupboards, the tradition of their original use thus surviving.

TUDOR-JACOBEAN OAK COURT CUPBOARD.

Court Cupboards, which made their début in Elizabethan days, were simply short cupboards in the genesis of the term (from French *court* = short), and were so called to distinguish them from the continental "standing" cupboards of the *dressoir* type. They were originally made in two divisions, and

usually, at first, enclosed in both, as in the Newark example shown in Colour Plate No. 12; the upper division was recessed, its cornice being supported by a turned column. This column was, in later varieties, reduced to a turned pendant or "drop," frequently of acorn shape; a structural peculiarity causing the cornice, which was almost invariably friezed, to overhang sufficiently to make a secret hiding-place. The functions of the court cupboards were originally to store the wines, food, and candles required by the family, and a cloth to cover 'the top was always used. In another characteristic design, consisting of open shelving below, the actual cupboard in the upper part was formed by small square doors, frequently canted back at each end, as in Sir Theodore Fry's court cupboard, forming Colour Plate No. 27. The ample shelf thus obtained was used for garnishing with plate. The term was, however, and is still employed to describe a piece of furniture (of Welsh origin usually) in which a third stage is superimposed on the old form of the court cupboard, to hold plates and mugs.

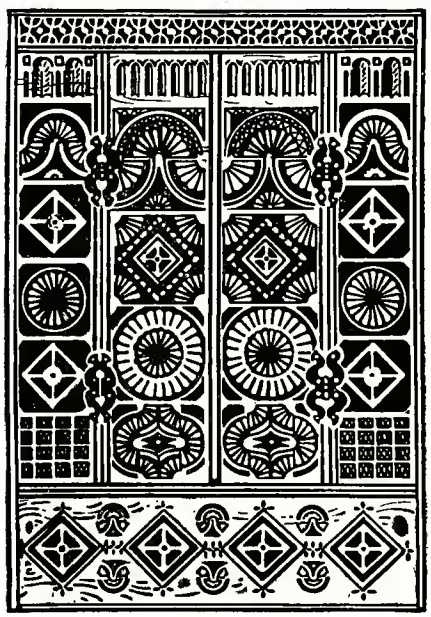
Though both the Caterham and the Newark court cupboards are of Stuart date, their construction is as typical of Elizabethan as of Stuart furniture. When the lower cupboard is omitted, as in Sir Theodore Fry's example, the piece may with equal accuracy be described as a

TUDOR-JACOBEAN DOUBLE-TIER'D BUFFET, PARNHAM.

Beaufette, Beaufait, Bofet, Bonfet, or Buffet.—A freedom from "the letter that killeth" is shown in the many English methods of spelling this Gallic synonym for our side-table. As great freedom has been shown in applying the term to any piece of furniture used for standing plate or other articles upon, required in dining. The term "Beefeaters," as applied to the yeomen of the royal guard, is a corruption of *Buffetiers*, *i.e.* atten-

dants at a *buffet* or sideboard. Their costume has been little changed, and conveys a good idea of that worn by men during Tudor times.

Credences.—The term *credence*, which one prefers to restrict to continental pieces, such as those in Colour Plates Nos. 17 and 19, is often, but with doubtful accuracy, used to describe old furniture of the cupboard or *buffet* types—forerunners of the modern sideboard—chests on legs, to which a shelf was usually attached near the foot. Such pieces were employed to carve meats upon after the steward or taster had fulfilled his doubtfully pleasant function of eating a portion, to detect poison, before it was served to the family.



FRONT OF CARVED ELIZABETHAN HANGING CUPBOARD, IN A COTTAGE NEAR CALVERTON.

Originally for church use, *credences* were subsequently used and developed for domestic purposes, and, upon the Continent, grew to several stages in height. The shelves of many *credences* are obviously too high for carving upon.

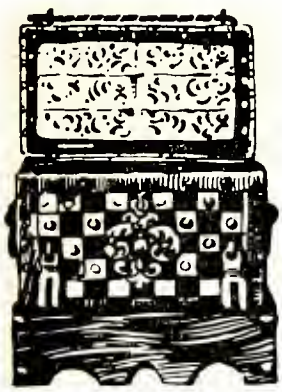
The Table of Degrees.—England does not appear to have observed so strictly as did France, the mediæval ordinances decreeing the number of stages or "steps" in these forerunners of the upper part of our high-backed modern sideboards. The prescribed numbers in the Table of Degrees were:—

2	"steps"	or "stages"	for the wife of a	knight-banneret
3	,,	,,	,,	countess.
4	,,	,,	,,	princess.
5	,,	,,	,,	queen.

Dressers—*dressoirs*—were of somewhat similar construction to the credences, but were originally cupboarded fixtures with tiers of

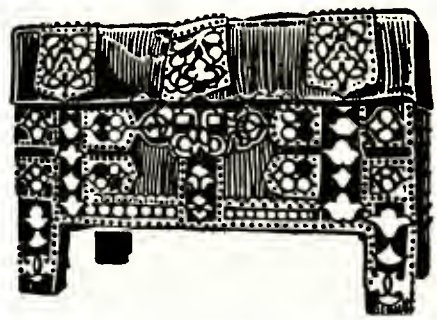
shelves. They gradually became lighter in construction and with greater table accommodation, whilst upright cupboards were added to the upper part. About the end of Henry VIII.'s reign the *dressoir* seems to have fallen into disuse, until the "Welsh dresser" of the succeeding period arrived, with its ample table part of convenient height, and its picturesquely homely rows of plates and mugs. The name

ARMOIRES was derived probably from *Armarium*. If so, it may be safely assumed that their original use was to keep valuables, arms, and armour free from dust and rust. Upon the disuse of armour they became cupboards in which to hang other dress equipments, and thus were the forerunners of the wardrobe. The use of the term



A RELIC OF THE ARMADA. TREASURE CHEST BELONGING TO THE CORPORATION OF WEYMOUTH.

BAHUT was originally confined in France to leathern travelling trunks. Its usage was gradually extended to strong coffers, boxes, or chests intended for travellers, and even to cupboards and *armoires*.



LEATHER COVERED CHEST SIMILAR TO THAT USED BY KATHERINE PARR.

HUTCHES (*huches*), though simple varieties of the coffers and chests of the mediæval home, were of somewhat better type than the bin or trough to which the term hutch is now applied. Their makers were originally called *huchiers*, and gradually became identified with joiners and carpenters.

By the end of Henry VIII.'s reign the old coffer type of chest, the front of which was formed by one piece or block, frequently iron-bound, was being supplanted by the panelled, *i.e.* framed-up, front.

FLANDERS CHESTS

All chests were raised at their bases at least a few inches above the ground, that they might be freer from damp; at first by continuing

the end posts, and, at a later period when mouldings were used, by the addition of turned balls or "buns."

AN ELIZABETHAN CHEST WITH PUNCHED GROUND. NATIONAL COLLECTION.

Very typical, and among the richest in design of the "Flanders Chests" in this country, is that at East Dereham. It is divided into seven niches or panels, separated by turned and ornamented buttresses of *François Iere* type, the ends being similarly treated: the whole piece is Renaissance in detail, save that the lock plate is of flamboyant Gothic design. A smaller but extremely interesting and rich chest is that belonging to Mr. Seymour Lucas, R.A.

The Late Gothic linen and *parchemin* panels of the preceding period were now superseded upon chests by the Italianate *Romayne* work, of medallioned panels with profiled heads of warriors, women, and merchants. A more architectural construction, based on the Renaissance façade, followed —as in the Offley Chest in Colour Plate No. 8—by pilasters, caryatides, and carved and inlaid panels. Inlay, indeed, was now in some instances deemed sufficiently ornamental, as in the Nonesuch Chest belonging to Professor Darwin, shown in Colour Plate No. 13. The more usual treatment of let-in woods during Elizabethan days was, however, in bands or simple geometrical forms, to strengthen by colour the carved decoration.

"POKERWORK" CHEST. E. RADFORD, ESQ.

PLATE XIII

INLAID NONESUCH CHEST

The Property of
FRANCIS DARWIN, ESQ., F.R.S., Cambridge

Length, 4 ft. 1 in.; height, 1 ft. 11½ in.; depth, 1 ft. 11½ in. *Circa* 1580

CARVED "DRAWINGE" TABLE, SHIBDEN HALL

The Property of J. LISTER, ESQ.

Length opened, 9 ft.; height, 2 ft. 10 in.; width of top, 2 ft. 10 in. *Circa* 1600

CARVED CHIMNEYPIECE AT CHIDDENSTONE, KENT

Circa 1600

EARLIEST ENGLISH WALLPAPER, AT BORDEN HALL

Circa 1580

THE examples of late sixteenth century woodwork illustrated in this plate show the real diversity of woodwork design, at a period one is apt to superficially regard as confined to crude graftings upon the Gothic oak, of primitive English concepts of Renaissance detail.

The Nonesuch chest, a well-preserved specimen of the inlaid coffers, whose decorative *raison d'être* seems to have been to hand down to posterity the outlines of the wonderful Palace of Nonesuch built by Henry VIII. (who supplemented native craftsmen by Italian, French, and Dutch sculptors and artificers), in rivalry of the architectural splendours promoted by Francis I.

Erected from the designs of the Italian architect-painter, Toto del Nunziata, who made England his home for nearly twenty years, the history of Nonesuch was as picturesque as the sky outline which, from the middle of the sixteenth century until the end of the seventeenth, it reared in the royal park at Cheam, near Ewell in Surrey. Bought from the Crown, and completed by Lord Arundel after Henry VIII.'s death, it was repurchased and occupied by Queen Elizabeth as a hunting lodge. It was the scene of the downfall of the Earl of Essex when, upon hearing of his Queen's displeasure, he left his command in Ireland without leave, and rushed "besmeared with dust and sweat" into her bedchamber. Upon its gift, with the title of Baroness of Nonesuch, by Charles II. to Barbara Palmer, Duchess of Cleveland, that delectable lady promptly sold the building

materials of which it was composed, and thus ignominiously closured an existence mentioned by both Evelyn and Pepys in their works.

The name of Nonesuch was also—it may be remembered—given to the wooden building imported from Holland, and erected at the end of old London Bridge.

The woods used in the marqueterie of the chest appear to be ebony, holly, yew, ash, rosewood, box, and walnut, upon oak; they have acquired exceptionally mellow tones, without detracting materially from the clearness of the details.

The mechanical excellence of the "Drawinge" Table is so evident that one wonders at its disuse, and the popularity of the modern extending-screw table; its name was derived from an ingenious arrangement enabling the top to be drawn out at each end so that its normal length is nearly doubled. Gallon measures such as that upon the "drawinge" table were made of bronze, and in use throughout Tudor times; the notches at the top regulating the precise capacity, which is found to be the same as the present standard.

During the restoration of the fifteenth-century timber-built Kentish house known as Borden Hall, portions of the wallpaper shown were discovered behind wainscot and battening in one of the rooms; the tough paper has been nailed with flat-headed nails to the "daubing" or plaster filling the space between the timber uprights. The design, as restored by Mr. Lindsay Butterfield, suggests Indian influence; possibly the blocks were cut for cotton printings, and the impressions struck off on paper were deemed so satisfactory that sufficient was printed for the apartment at Borden Hall.

The chimneypiece, though devoid of exceptional features, is interestingly typical of the wooden mantels which, before the conclusion of Elizabeth's reign, had supplanted the hooded stone structures necessary with the inferior draught and consequent tendency to smoke of the lower chimneys of earlier times. Extending from floor to ceiling, the Elizabethan chimneypiece, by its importance artistically, as well as by its functions and associations, dominated the apartment.

The peaceful reigns of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth encouraged the English deification of the fireside embodied in Longfellow's lines:—

> Each man's Chimney is his Golden Milestone,
> Is the central point from which he measures every distance
> Through the Gateways of the world around him.
>
> In his farthest wanderings, still he sees it,
> Hears the talking flame, the answering night wind,
> As he heard them when he sat with those who were but are not.

Edwin Fole '09

THE HUSTILEMENT OF THE GREAT HALL

For some time after the end of the Middle Ages the convenient trestle table continued in use. It was usually covered with an embroidered linen cloth, and was removed as soon as the good fare spread upon its board had been partaken of. As the *Boke of Curtasye* puts it:—

> Whenne they have wasshen and grace is sayde,
> Away he takes at a brayde,
> Aboydes the borde into the flore,
> Tase away the trestles that habe been so store.

The floor was thus freed for dance or frolic, for, solemn as is the typical Englishman in modern days, his forefathers' folk-songs and dancing were famous over the whole of Western Europe.

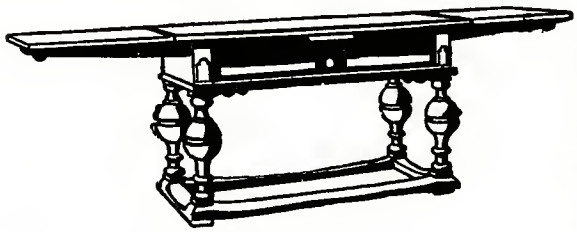
When, upon the decline of vassalage, the lord and lady no longer dined in the hall, lengthy tables were not so much in demand. Trestle tables similar to that shown in Colour Plate No. 14, and those whose tops were supported by turned posts with four square brackets above and below, were therefore consequently superseded by the "joyned," *i.e.* solid, table with fixed top and framed lower part.

CARVED OAK TABLE, FROM "QUEEN MARY'S AUDIENCE CHAMBER," HOLYROOD PALACE.

The times having become more settled, men also began to feel it safe to dine without literally having their backs to the wall. The tables were therefore set more in the centre of the room, the family and guests sat *vis-à-vis*, instead of upon one side only of the board, the servants waiting upon them, as in present days, from behind the chair, instead of passing the viands from the other side of the table. Width of board now became desirable, and with the increased seating capacity the length could be lessened. In the succeeding reign the proportions were altered in accordance.

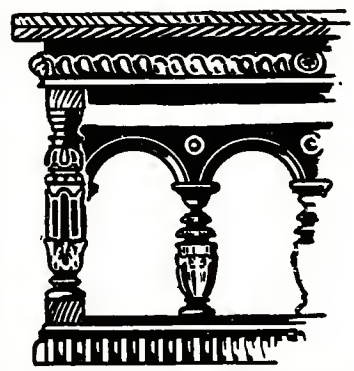
The Draw-Table. — The draw or drawinge-table (such as that

illustrated in Colour Plate No. 34) was introduced into England not long after the middle of the sixteenth century. Its principle is so effective that one regrets that the extension screw tables have ousted it from popularity. Briefly stated, the object of the drawinge-table is to double the length and consequent dining accommodation of the table. This it achieves by means of two shelves, sliding under the central top, but so arranged that upon their being drawn out, the upper top falls into their place, thus forming a level surface.

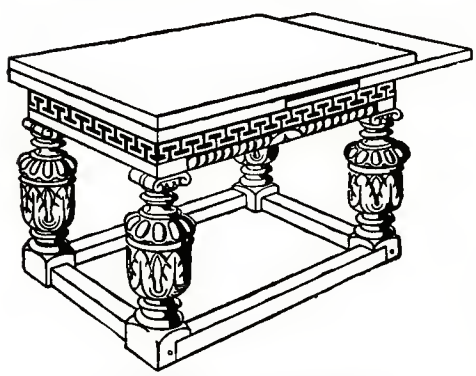


LATE TUDOR DRAW-TABLE.

The tops of the long tables were often made so thick, that their weight alone would have sufficed to keep them in place. The length of some old refectory tables is surprising. One exists at Penshurst nearly thirty feet long, requiring many of the "carpets" which were used to cover the table tops during this and the next period. Two tables sold from the historic mansion of Holme Lacy for 340 guineas and 200 guineas, were 23 feet and 20 feet long respectively, and at Cefn Mably is an even finer example, over 40 feet in length by 4¼ inches thick, with every appearance of being made from one single plank: a truly noble board, upheld by fourteen legs.



OAK TABLE IN LORD DARNLEY'S AUDIENCE CHAMBER, HOLYROOD PALACE.



DRAW-TABLE, LEEDS CASTLE.

The draw-table at Leeds Castle is so deservedly well known an example of the Elizabethan bulb-leg, that one regrets it should not be an entirely satisfactory piece, the legs of one table having evidently been clumsily added to the frame of another,

whilst the Greek fret, though used in the Italian Renaissance, is not typical of the English adaptation of the style. As, however, both the tables from which this one has apparently been constructed were, it appears certain, of the same period, and the legs are so fine, the whole table may well be regarded as a valuable example of the draw-table. The rails on these framed tables, raised an inch or two from the ground, have probably helped to preserve many from the rotting effect of the damp, rush-strewn floors, and were doubtless appreciated by sitters because they could, by placing their feet on them, avoid the draught as well as the moisture.

EARLY JACOBEAN TABLE.
(*Property of* Dr. GUTHRIE.)

The enormous bulbs so characteristic of the period were frequently built up, even in olden times, of pieces fastened round the leg and carved. The shovelboard table shown in the Colour Plate of Littlecote Hall (No. 26), and the Shibden Hall table in Colour Plate No. 13, illustrate other typical tables of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.

"MELON BULB" TABLE. PARNHAM COLLECTION.

Harrison, in his book on the England of his Elizabethan days, mentions, among other instances of the spread of domestic comfort, that the use of costly furniture had descended "even into the inferior artificers and many farmers . . . who had learned to garnish their joyned beds with tapestrie and silk hangings, whereas our fathers, yea and we ourselves, have lain full oft upon straw pallets . . . and a good round log for a pillow."

TUDOR BEDSTEADS

Though dates anterior to Elizabethan times are claimed for many bedsteads, there are few, if any, existing unaltered examples of Henry VIII.'s period.

The four-poster is the typical early Tudor bed. Its heavy wooden canopy (the tester) is supported by bulbous turned posts. Richly carved cherubs and angels (afterwards degenerating into the heathen satyrs, gods, and goddesses) presided over it, no doubt as a protection to the sleeper, hence the quaint doggerel of our nursery days—

> Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John,
> Bless the bed that I lie on;
> Four corners to my bed,
> Four angels round my head.

In Elizabethan times the head-end of the bedstead was filled in with panelling up to the underside of the tester, the turned posts being then required only for the foot-end, as in the Littlecote Bedstead in Colour Plate No. 11. A hiding place was sometimes contrived in the tester, by means of double panelling, whilst part of the panelling of the head-end at times formed a door, communicating with a "priest's hole"—a small secret chamber or passage for escape. As a further means of hiding property, recesses were arranged in the heavy bases which support the posts.

ELIZABETHAN BEDSTEAD, ENCLOSED AT HEAD-END.

The wealth of carving upon

the tester, the head-ends, and the bulbous posts of the bedsteads of the period, have offered irresistible temptations to the producers of spurious antiques. Old carved oak bedsteads could, in the early days of the vogue of old oak, usually be bought cheaply, as they occupy too much room to appeal to the collector with limited floor-space. The carved oak overmantel craze is responsible for the destruction of many a tester and panelled head-end. The enriched posts are readily convertible into "Elizabethan" table legs and other appreciated ingredients in the concoction of woodwork "antiques." Though more cheerful and hygienic than the contemporary and box-like bed of Brittany, Flanders, and Germany, the four-poster, with its heavy dark "ceiling" or "tester," is apt upon occupation to prove more depressive than impressive, more uncomfortable than stately.

THE HARISON BRASS.

Henry the Eighth, according to an old inventory of furniture at Hampton Court Palace, possessed a bed 11 feet square, whilst the

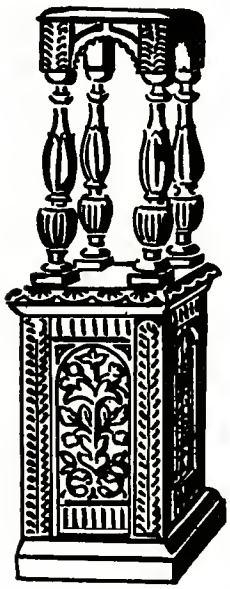
Great Bed of Ware mentioned in *Twelfth Night*, a monstrous piece of furniture, is stated to have sleeping accommodation for twenty-four! It was apparently at one time painted, but is of the sixteenth century, despite its being inscribed in modern days with the date 1463. It has earned a goodly harvest for its owners from Bank-holiday connoisseurs of old woodwork.

The "sixteen post" is another characteristic form of Tudor days, consisting of four openwork bases, with columns at each of the four square corners, upon which the posts rest.

An interesting old brass, copied herewith, in memory of Alice Harison, is to be seen in St. Nicholas Church, near Twyford, Berks. It indicates a tester fourpost bedstead with lockers or drawers underneath.

Bedsteads were much valued during Tudor times, as may be

judged from their frequently having names given them. The modern value of many old pieces is inflated by the belief that Queen Elizabeth slept in them; but they are so numerous that, to have done so, she must have spent a great portion of her long reign in travelling daily from one bed to another.



ONE OF THE FOUR BASES OF A "SIXTEEN POST" BED.

The history of the bed in all ages and countries forms a fascinating commentary on humanity's ways: the reader will therefore find much of interest in the special chapter on "The Bed."

Surviving equipments, other than bedsteads, evidence little study of comfort or luxury in the bedroom during Tudor days. Much as one regrets to attack the hardy legends providing picturesque personalities with decorative furniture, one must point out that such toilet glasses, as that alleged to have been used by Mary Queen of Scots, did not appear until nearly a century after her execution.

TUDOR CHAIRS

Chairs which were either (1) Folding X-shape or *curule* in form, (2) thrown, *i.e.* turned, or (3) "seeled" "close," *i.e.* enclosed by panels, as in Colour Plate No. 14, did not become plentiful until the succeeding period: very gradually between the times of Henry VIII.'s accession, and of that of James II., they won their way to recognition as necessities of household comfort.

"CLOSE" CHAIRS.—When with the termination of the Civil Wars came the disuse of heavy armour, the necessity no longer existed for strong and heavy seats, and the "close," enclosed or "seeled" chairs, such as that shown on Plate 14, which were survivals of the church stall, gradually gave way to more open or unpanelled types. The necessity of space for the puffed trunk hose and the farthingale soon rendered

PLATE XIV

OAK TRESTLE TABLE

The Property of Walter Withall, Esq. Total length, 9 ft. 7 in.; height, 2 ft. 9 in.; width of top, 2 ft. 9 in. *Circa* 1570

"MINE HOST'S" CHAIR

Formerly the Property of Dr. Abel *Circa* 1540

Until the beginning of the sixteenth century a "table" meant a list, or picture, a backgammon or chess board, the palm of the hand, and many other more or less plane-surfaced objects,—but was not used to signify the piece of furniture which we understand by the word.

The Trestle Table consisted of a long board—sometimes hinged in the middle for greater portability — supported by "trestles" or "threstules"; the whole being readily separated and placed upright against the wall when the meal was finished ("more light ye knaves, and turn the tables up"), leaving the floor space clear for dance or other sport.

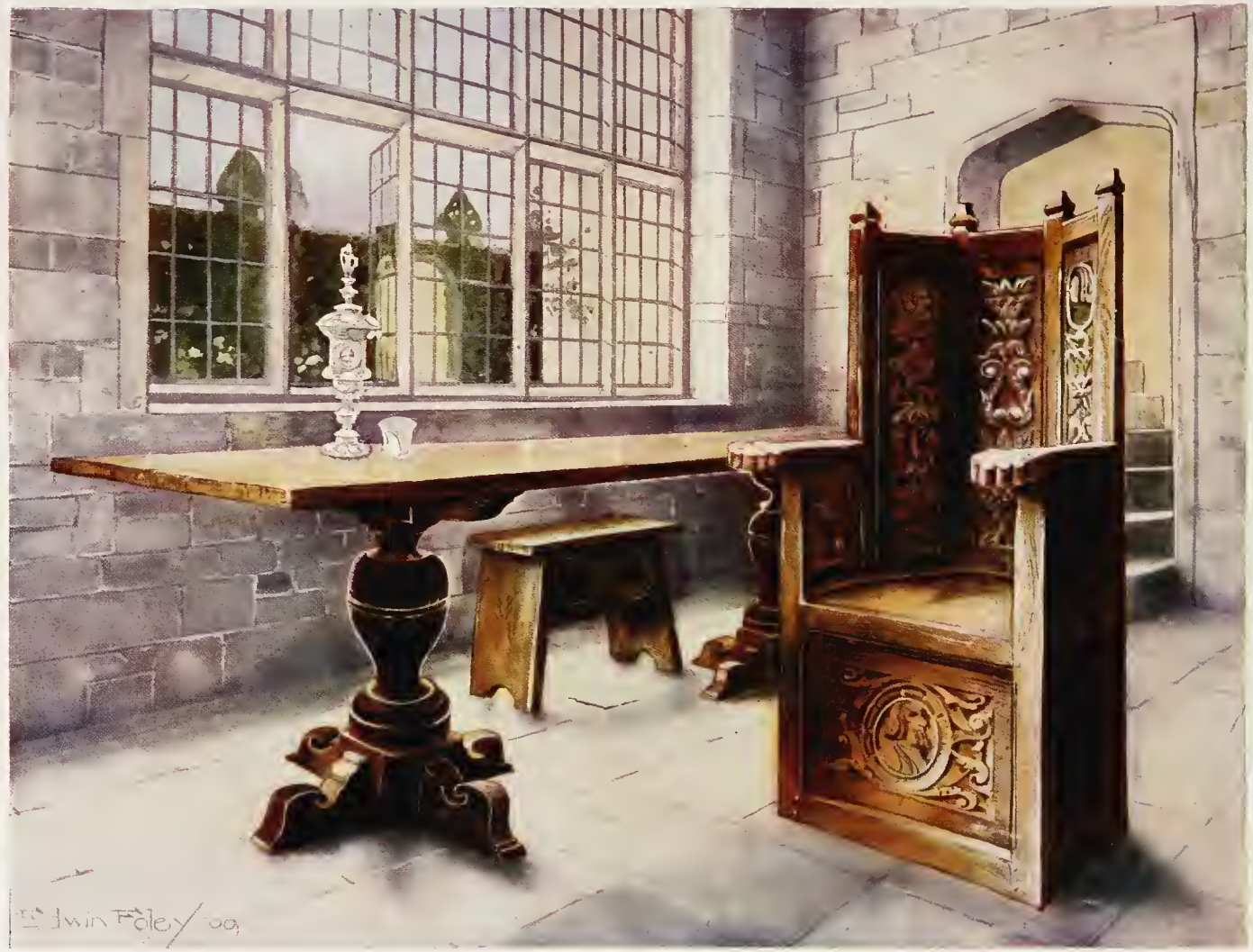
The "threstule" was usually made of three shaped brackets, extending from top to bottom. The bulb-leg "heart of oak" central post of Mr. Walter Withall's table is an interesting late variant. The table originally came from Cumberland and had been painted white, probably by some nineteenth-century barbarian. It possesses an alternative shorter top, and is fashioned with that happy disregard of precise repetition which is, one suspects, part of the secret charm of old Tudor work.

After the middle of the sixteenth century the making of fixed-

top tables is said to have entirely supplanted that of the "trestle" table, but one would greatly doubt the accuracy of the allegation, so obviously useful must the type have been, even had we not the evidence of the table herewith illustrated, the details of which appear to the writer to savour rather of the last quarter of the sixteenth century. Moreover, we have proof of the continued use of the trestle table, if not of the continued making of the type, in more than one passage in contemporary writings; for instance, Velasco, Constable of Castile, a Spanish envoy who came to England at the commencement of the seventeenth century, was evidently present at a royal banquet at which a trestle table was used, when he wrote that after the cloth had been removed "they placed the top on the floor, and their majesties standing upon it washed their hands, which is said to be an ancient custom."

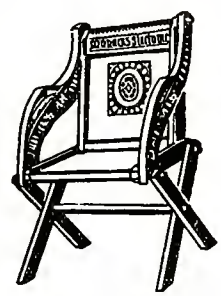
One sees at times upon the edges of old tables, cuts made by the knives of those days; when food was often eaten from the table without even the interposition of the piece of the bread then called a "trencher."

The "Mine Host's" Chair is of the "close" (enclosed) early form evolved from the stall: the "Romayne" work in the three canted panels forming the back, and that upon the front panel of the "locker," together with the linen patterning of the side panels, fixing the date as not later than 1540.


Edwin Foley '09

it advisable to leave open the spaces at the sides underneath the chair arms; for fashions in dress often dictate the forms of furniture.

Neither the Elizabethan nor the Jacobean chair was easily moved with one hand. Comparatively light chairs, known as *Coquetoire*, *Cacqueteuse*, Conversation, or *Chaise de Femme*, with high and narrow backs, were in use on the Continent during the sixteenth century, and a few were imported to this country, but English chair-makers were far in the rear of their continental brethren until a much later period in the century. Tudor chairs were also somewhat lower than those of present times.



ORIGINAL GLASTONBURY CHAIR.

The decorative reward of frank obedience to special requirements is evidenced by the distinctive design known as

The Glastonbury Chair, from its use by the abbots of that Abbey during the times of Henry VIII. Its peculiar feature is the shape of the arms, which are so designed that the vestment, worn by the priest, may rest in their "dips" in the neck of the occupant, thus avoiding the unpleasant and undignified "riding up." The projecting pegs fastening the cross-pieces and arm-pieces are also unusual.

"RIVING"

Should the writer ever have the psychical opportunity afforded him of conversing with the shade of a sixteenth century wood-worker, foremost among the many queries upon which he would desire enlightenment, would be the method adopted for cutting panels in those days. Apart from the surface splashes which are observable in these old panels, a distinctly different surface is observable, not, in the writer's opinion, to be accounted for by the action of time, and not producible by any existing tools.

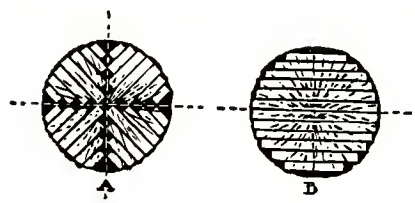
When, in addition to these variations in the surface, we find at times one side of the panel to be wedge-like in section, and shaved-off

at one edge in order to fit into the groove of the framing, a distinct case seems to be made out for the use by the old craftsmen of some now-lost tool or method.

It has been suggested, with much apparent reason, that the wood was "riven" with an adze, or some similar tool now extinct. Carriage, coach, and boat-builders use the adze largely, and accomplish their best work with it, affirming usually that riven wood retains much more "life" and spring than sawn wood. Riving is nowadays practically a lost art as far as the cabinetmaker is concerned. The adze is not part of his kit, the music of the machine saw having now arrived to proclaim the sympathy of Orpheus with the modern woodworker. Indeed, the machine, in its many ingenious forms, reigns supreme, and with plane and sand-paper speedily reduces surfaces to the modern ideal of glassy smoothness. The subtle variations in the surface, resulting from the old technique, can be felt by the tips of sensitive fingers when passed over old panelling, and doubtless give much of the charm of the old oaken panelling of Tudor days.

WAINSCOTING

It must not be forgotten, however, that the greater part of this characteristic variation of surface was the result of cutting the planks at an angle to a line drawn through the centre, in the manner indicated by (A). Oak being plentiful, the old workers disregarded economy for the sake of obtaining the diagonal splashes or markings which, being cellular, do not shrink with the rest of the wood, and are consequently perceptible to touch, as well as appearing lighter or darker in colour than the rest of the surface, according to the positions in which they are viewed, and whether varnished or left untreated.



The modern cutting (B) is admittedly the more economical, the amount of "waste" (indicated in black) being much less, but the distinctive "figure" of the old method is not obtained.

METHODS OF TUDOR CRAFTSMEN

Another custom of the old workmen, to which some of the attractive character of Tudor Renaissance decorative furniture may be owing, is that of trusting to the eye when repeating details rather than to rule or callipers. The Tudor cabinetmaker appears to have been innocent of the use of oiled or other tracing paper.

Is it too traitorous to the designer to suggest that much of the picturesque "unexpectedness" and charm of sixteenth century work may be due to this absence of mechanical accuracy in the details, and to the lack of a professional architect and designer?

"POLISHING"

Much early Tudor oak decorative furniture has suffered, in common with late Gothic woodwork, from a species of surface decay in consequence of neither wax, oil or other polish being used. When the surface of wood in decorative furniture was touched at all, it was apparently wax-polished or oiled. Varnish, previously unknown in England, was introduced during Elizabethan days from the Continent, but was of a poor quality compared with that in contemporary use in Spain and in Italy.

THE METAL WORKER

Was generally behind in style. When his work was pierced, scarlet cloth was frequently placed behind, both in England and on the Continent, a method of decoration which is said to have originated

in the gruesome custom of fixing the flayed skins of enemies to the doors of buildings by iron hinges of scrolls.

Judging by the size of the doors and window-openings and other evidence, there is little doubt that pieces of furniture were at times made in the actual rooms they were intended to furnish, and of wood grown upon the estate of their owners.

It may be well to reiterate here, in explanation of the apparent peculiarity one sometimes encounters of pieces of old oak furniture decorated with linen-fold patterns at the sides, while the front panels are plain, that the front panels probably were originally painted with some religious design, which it was dangerous to, or repugnant to the opinions of, succeeding owners to retain.

How much decorative furniture was imported into this country we have no means of gauging. Probably the demand for Flemish furniture was assisted by the similarity of the countries, creeds, ideals, trading proclivities, and the common struggle of both for political and religious freedom.

WOODS AND FORESTS

WOOD CARVING, MONTACUTE HOUSE.

Danske and Estriche oak had for centuries been purchased from the Continent. When, in Elizabethan days, the comparative scarcity of oak began to seriously alarm the more thoughtful people, Harrison laments the destruction of English woods, one man having, he says, "turned sixty woods (trees?) into one paire of breeches." Walnut was planted again, but practically no steps were taken to ensure to succeeding generations of Englishmen the natural wealth of their national wood. Even in later times, so little were the forests valued, that in order to deprive the robbers who infested the Chiltern Hills of cover, the woods which clothed its slopes were cut down! Had England but realised in the past the

value of afforestation, as promptly as did continental peoples, the enormous sums which have left this country in exchange for the inferior oak of the New World would have been saved.

Vestiges of the druidical veneration for the oak survive in the Englishman's mind. He is rightly so accustomed to identify the national wood with the past rise and power of his native land, that it comes almost as a shock to learn that the Elizabethans, much as they valued the oak for shipbuilding, were glad to use walnut when they could obtain it for the finest furniture. Some few pieces have survived. Indeed, judging from inventories of the sixteenth century, the new wood was in greater use during Elizabeth's reign than is usually thought; an apparently authentic record of his chattels, taken on the Earl of Leicester's death, enumerating thirty-five carved bedsteads, of which thirty are of walnut wood.

TUDOR HOUSES

The eighteenth century witnessed the destruction, refacement, and defacement of scores of magnificent Tudor houses of the picturesque half-timbered, "black and white" type, and of brick or stone; usually superseded by classic erections having façades adapted almost *en bloc* from the Greek temple. When the temple is placed in the midst of an English park it usually looks alien. One gladly condones the absence of academical correctness in the picturesque halls of the Tudor Renaissance period, for the sake of their spontaneity and natural growth, as part and parcel of the English landscape.

Tudor Renaissance, in both its exterior and interior expression, has been well summarised as an attempt on the part of the English builders "to translate Italian ideas into their own vernacular."

Perhaps the summary of the Elizabethan era best suited to

the twentieth century, is that of Dodsley the publisher—to whom Johnson is said to have been indebted for the idea of his English Dictionary :—

"Her ministers were just, her counsellors were sage, her captains were bold, and her maids of honour ate beefsteaks for breakfast."

PLATE XV

UPHOLSTERED CHAIR AND COUCH WITH ADJUSTABLE ENDS

The Property of Lord Sackville, Knole Park

Couch sizes: 3 ft. 6 in. high; 5 ft. 9 in. long.
Circa 1600

Until the conclusion of Queen Elizabeth's reign, the branch of the upholsterer's craft which encloses stuffing in fabrics fixed to the wooden framework of seats, was unpractised, if not unknown, in England and Scotland. The discomfort of the upright back and hard seat had, however, for the preceding half-century been minimised by the provision of loose "Quysshons," three or four sets being frequently bequeathed in contemporary wills; the favourite colours appear to have been either blue or of a shade of crimson, known in those days as "cremyson," "cramosie," or "incarnadine."

The beginning of the seventeenth century witnessed the introduction of the French and Italian fixed upholstery; whilst the decoration of woven material by embroidery (one of the few art crafts in which British fingers were as deft as those of the Continent) gradually gave place to the rich loom products of Genoa and Venice.

If there were a dearth of food for melancholic reflections on the fleeting nature of human works, a visit to the stately storehouses of early upholstered furniture, such as Penshurst, Knole, or Holyrood, might supply the want, for it must be confessed that the mellow dignity with which oak furniture generally ages is seldom

the lot of textiles; the velvet becomes moth-corrupted, the tinsel trimmings tarnished.

The lover of old furniture, if, as is usually the case, a lover of nature also, will not readily forget a visit to Knole Park, with its leafy avenues, its deer park, its royal, noble, and ambassadorial associations. Apart from the unique specimens of pathetically time-worn early Jacobean beds, couches, double seats, stools, and tabourets, its galleries are famed for late sixteenth and seventeenth-century woodwork. Not the least interesting is the curious wooden-bedded billiard table, said to have been the first used in England, and, even if not early Stuart, made before the close of the style. Early billiards apparently were played with central croquet hoops, and resembled table croquet somewhat.

The chair is that shown in Mytens' almost contemporary portrait of James I.; whilst the couch has appeared in modern painting, having been depicted in Marcus Stone's picture, "The Stolen Keys."

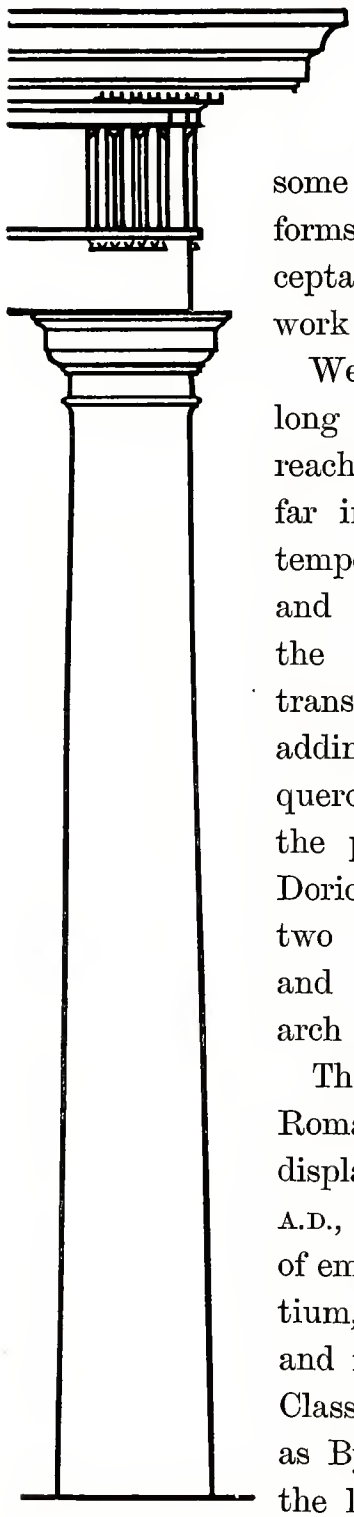
The pieces are shown as they probably appeared before time had dimmed their freshness, in an apartment similar to the Organ Room at Knole, whilst the details of the panelling are from other parts of the building.

CONTINENTAL CONTEMPORARIES OF THE LATE GOTHIC AND TUDOR PERIODS. THE RENAISSANCE IN ITALY

(Reference to the Style Chart in Part I., and to the Time-table of Architectural Styles in Part II., will be found of material assistance.)

FROM time to time the formative arts, stirred by and voicing the aspirations of their day, flower into some new phase of beauty, to be nurtured in its native soil, and thence transplanted to other lands, whose national characteristics evolve variants of the type. Such a response to the time-spirit was the intellectual and artistic movement known as the Renaissance, that great revival or rebirth of interest in, and of insight into, Art, Letters, and Life, which was in full flower when, in the last quarter of the fifteenth century, decorative furniture began to be introduced into private English homes.

Born in Italy more than a century before it became supreme in France, vitalising the architecture and applied arts of that country, the movement spread to Germany, where it took a religious aspect, and stimulated the Reformation; to Spain, inspiring Columbus to set forth on a voyage which added a continent to the known world, so coincidently with this period of equally memorable intellectual expansion; and at last, as we have seen, to England, there, under Henry the Eighth, impelling such men as Linacre, Colet, and More

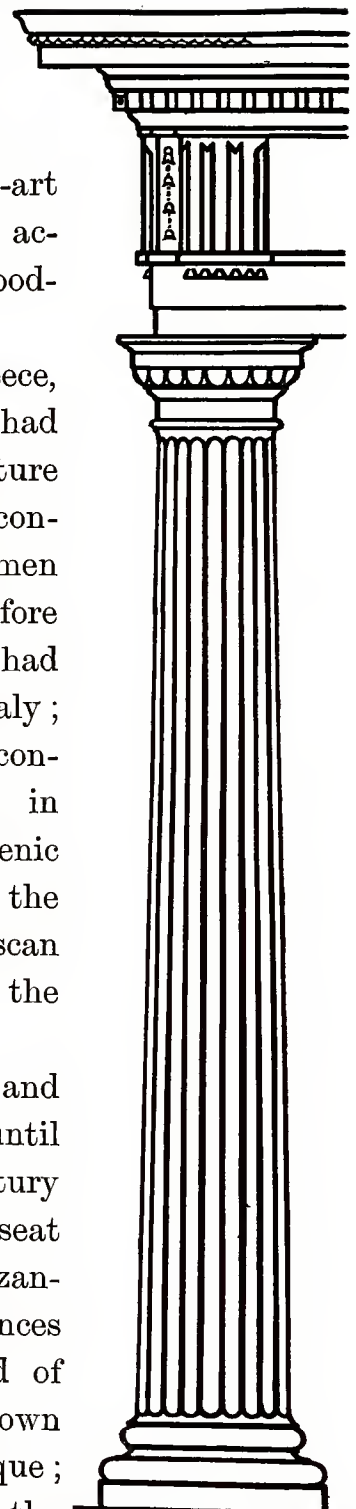


ROMAN DORIC ORDER.

to give "this wholesome ferment of men's minds" a trend towards learning, some years before the applied-art forms of Renaissance obtained acceptance in the decorative woodwork of the country.

We have seen that classic Greece, long ere the Christian era, had reached a degree of art and culture far in advance of any of her contemporaries; that her craftsmen and artists, when she fell before the all-conquering Romans, had transplanted their arts into Italy; adding—with the aid of their conquerors in war and students in the peaceful arts—to the Hellenic Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian, the two additional orders of Tuscan and Composite; together with the arch and dome.

These classic modes — Greek and Roman — prevailed in Italy until displaced towards the fourth century A.D., upon the removal of the seat of empire by Constantine to Byzantium, by a wave of Eastern influences and forces leading to the blend of Classic and Asiatic Greek known as Byzantine, and to Romanesque; the latter in turn yielding to the Pointed or Gothic styles, national



TYPICAL RENAISSANCE ADAPTATION OF ROMAN DORIC ORDER. (*From an example by* SCAMOZZI.)

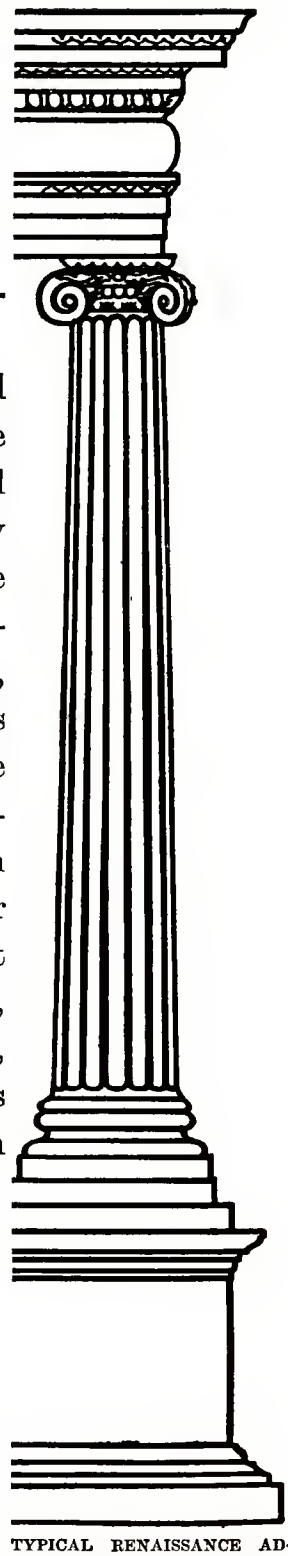
ROMAN IONIC ORDER.

interpretations of which prevailed throughout Western and Middle Europe, with the exception of such parts of Spain as felt the domination of the Moslem arts long after they had freed themselves from the Moors.

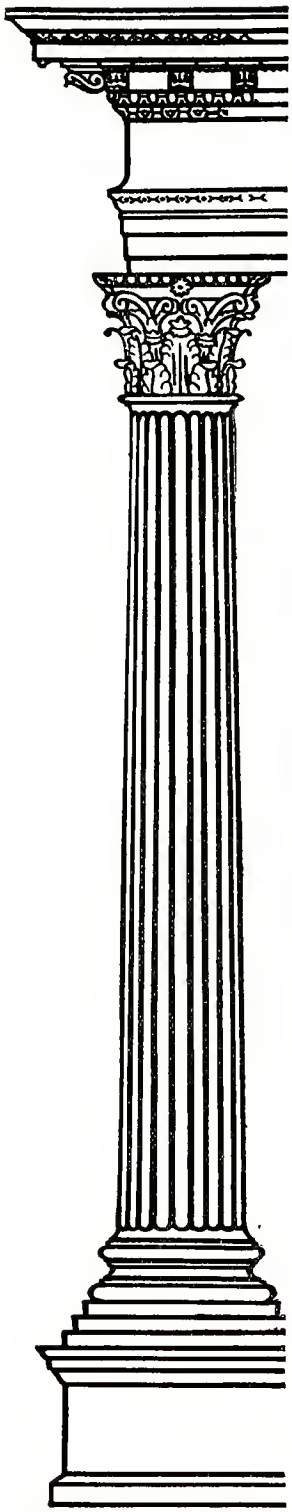
Save in Italy, the grandeur and the gloom, the silence and the strength, of the Gothic architectural environment yielded but sullenly and with compromises to the graceful vivacity of the new interpretation of classic forms; indeed, in parts of France and Flanders the new gospel appears to have been adopted in decorative woodwork before its acceptance in architecture; nor is this a matter for wonder when one realises that the art of the Renaissance was, upon the Continent as in England, as truly the child of the home as that of the Middle Ages had been the child of the Church.

THE PASSING OF THE GOTHIC

Gothic had never obtained in Rome; indeed, in Italy generally the Gothic spirit has never held the undisputed sway it possessed



TYPICAL RENAISSANCE ADAPTATION OF ROMAN IONIC. (*From an example by* PALLADIO.)

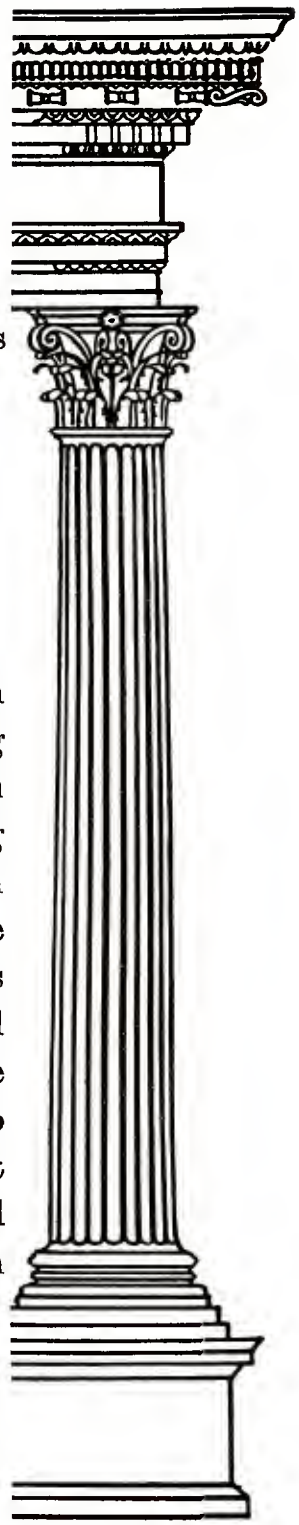


TYPICAL RENAISSANCE ADAPTATION OF CORINTHIAN ORDER.
(*From an example by* SCAMOZZI.)

over other lands. The first stages of the evolution of modern, from mediæval modes, are traceable as far back as the middle of the fourteenth century, a hundred years before the fall of Constantinople caused Greek scholars and artists to migrate into Italy.

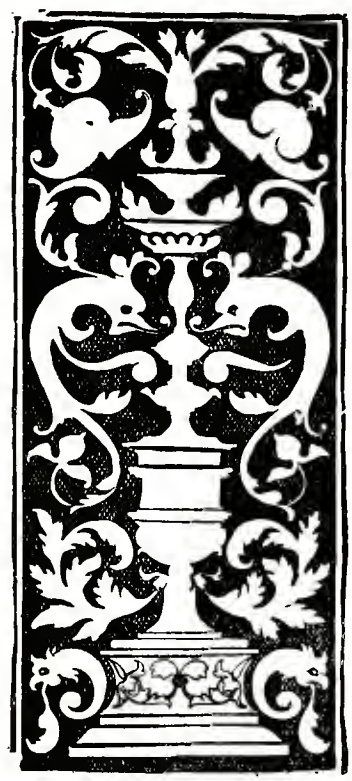
THE CINQUECENTO IN DECORATIVE WOODWORK

The magnificent outcome in beautiful woodwork commencing about the middle of the fourteenth century, was in full flower during the fifteenth and culminated in the sixteenth century, when the intervals of peace from the inroads of French, Swiss, Germans, and Spaniards were utilised by the nobles and merchant princes, to embody architecturally the spirit of the Renaissance as interpreted by the great Palladio, and to adorn the galleries and salons of the new palaces with frescoes by the glorious school of artists who had arisen in those, the days of Michael Angelo, Raphael, Cellini, and del Andrea Sarto. The walls were covered with gorgeous tapestries,



ROMAN CORINTHIAN ORDER.

stamped velvets, and gilded leathers, or with magnificent inlaid panelling; though the finest examples of the inlayers' art—made by the cloistered *intarsiatori*—were to be seen in the churches. The floors were also inlaid with the rich marbles characteristic of Italian taste from the days of ancient Rome. The whole formed a magnificent setting for the stately pieces of gilt, painted, carved, or otherwise decorated furniture.



PANEL OF PILASTER, ITALIAN RENAISSANCE.

A peculiarly delightful *patina* of blond or pale gold has been imparted by time to the Italian walnut and chestnut, which, with oak, cypress, and soft woods, were chiefly used in the construction of Renaissance woodwork; supplemented and supplanted towards the end of the century by "facings" of ebony inlaid with ivory. The love of bright colour is so ingrained in the Latin race that the Italian woodworkers appear to have been somewhat ashamed of exhibiting the wood composing their furniture, and to have directed their skill towards entirely concealing it by a coating of adhesive plaster (*gesso*) which they coloured, gilded, and frequently decorated — as in the *cassone* or marriage chest shown in the third colour plate of Part I.—with allegories and subjects such as Petrarch, Dante Alighieri, and Boccaccio, the advance guard of modern literature, had taught their countrymen to appreciate. Such subjects breathed anew the spirit of ancient Greece and Rome. The triumph of Christianity had been the doom of many a "heathen" legend in which some profound truth was embedded: the corn was sacrificed with the chaff: winnowing being usually too slow and irksome a task for the destructive bigot, or the zealous convert.

Italy led Europe from the mediæval to the modern conception of life and learning, and Florence under the Medici led Italy.

FLORENCE THE FONT

From the days of Giotto until the sixteenth century Florence was the font from which the inspiration of the new Art was chiefly drawn by the sister cities of Etruria. Indeed, the northern cities long retained as distinct a school in their furniture as in their pictures. Florence, the city of its birth, continued true to its dignified yet vivacious treatment of classic details, was least affected by eccentricities, and held out longest against the decay of taste throughout Italy.

ITALIAN MIRROR FRAME. NATIONAL COLLECTION.

Despite the degree of quickened sensibility and the essentially civil nature of the movement, Florentine workmen were accorded, under the Renaissance, no such licence as that given to the mediæval craftsmen. The designer, artist or architect, appears to have provided the details and insisted upon their precise execution.

As the style progressed, architecture dominated the design of the furniture increasingly. In the cabinets made in imitation of temples and palaces the fittings tend to be copies in miniature of the details of architectural interiors, even to the imitation of perspective effects. This is especially noticeable in the next period.

A sense of line and proportion is innate in the Florentine school. Even colour was subordinated to form, and pure line was sought for

PLATE XVI

CARVED OAK ARMOIRE, bearing the Cipher of Lambert Suavius of Liége, and Dated 1540

In the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh

Length, 4 ft. 5 in.; height, 6 ft. 1 in.; depth, 2 ft.

CARVED OAK TABLE

In the Musée Carnavalet, Paris

One's appreciation of the Liége *bahut*, armoire, or *meuble à deux corps* is tempered by a sense of familiarity with its details, belonging as it does to a type of carved decorative design for which Belgian and English makers of the spurious antique have evinced their predilections by cheap imitation. Its cornice also is disproportionately heavy; nevertheless, it is an example possessing much interest, of a period when Liége had a population far exceeding that of contemporary London, and had quite recovered from Charles the Bold's ferocious punishment of its revolt at the instigation of Louis xi.

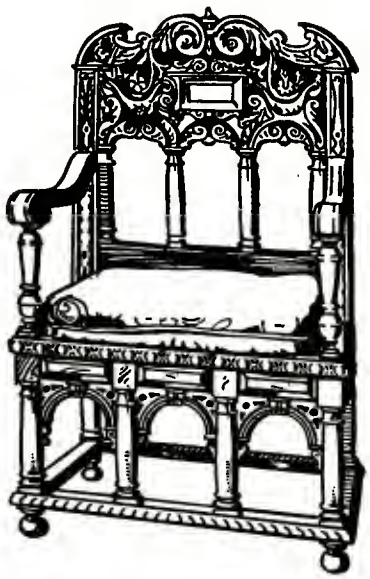
It is instructive to compare the crude shaping of the primitive solid trestle which upheld the equally primitive board with such a vigorously carved emanation of Sambin or Du Cerceau's pencil, as is the table from the Carnavalet Museum; I have preferred to show in these pieces the natural present-day colouring of the wood, though inclined to the belief that, in common with perhaps the majority, certainly a large proportion of decorative furniture prior to the reign of Louis xiii., they may have been painted in strong colours; a con-

tinuance of ancient Classic and Gothic practices which would afflict our æsthetic sense almost as sorely as the sight of the naturalistically painted Greek statues—so accustomed are we to the mellow tones, sombre warmth, and grain-play of the natural woods.

The tapestry shown is sketched from the fine piece in the Pierpont Morgan Collection.

Edwin Foley '09

D'Yvon Collection.



(*Property of* Sir George Donaldson.)

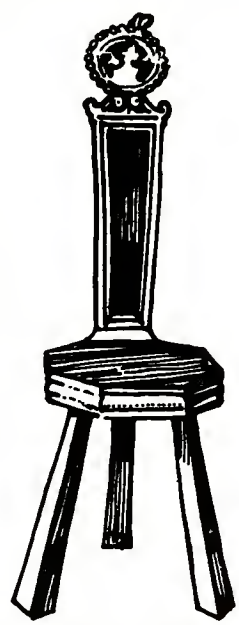
D'Yvon Collection.

ITALIAN CARVED CHAIRS, SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

its abstract beauty, not for its "message." The picturesque irregularity which is the charm of pointed architecture never appealed to the Italian as it did to the French, German, and English builders: he loved the horizontal line too much.

THE RIVAL CITIES

Though to Florence belongs so much of the glory of the Renaissance, Pisa, Bologna, Siena, and the other chief cities of Etruria shared with Rome in the glories of the movement; indeed, Siena may fairly claim priority for its carving and inlaying, whilst the decorative furniture made by the artists and craftsmen of Venice,—



LATE FIFTEENTH CENTURY CHAIR. FROM THE STROZZI PALACE.

THE CITY OF PEARL AND GOLD,

—shows their sensuous and colour-loving prodigality. The florid Venetian mirror, the Venetian ornamental

glass, and Venetian carved furniture of to-day, whether of soft wood gilt or of walnut, are survivals of the Venice of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, ere she ceased to be the commercial centre of the world, and the chief factor in transporting the products of the Levant to the nations of the West.

FLORENTINE FOLDING CHAIR.

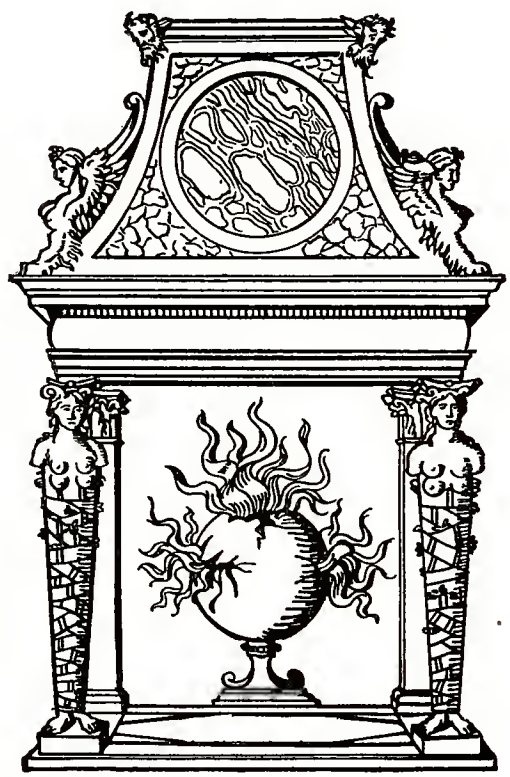
To inhabitants of a country whose climate permits of living chiefly in the open air, the warmth of the ingle has but little attractions in comparison with its appeal to the dwellers in less sunny lands.

The Italian winter being but short at its worst,

FIREPLACES

are not necessarily the all-important pieces or stationary furniture; nor is comfort the first consideration. Nevertheless, the Italian chimney-piece of marble or stone, with its deep frieze and architectural treatment, characteristic of the sixteenth century, frequently dominates the apartment, attracting by its refined simplicity more than do the heavily hooded French chimney-pieces.

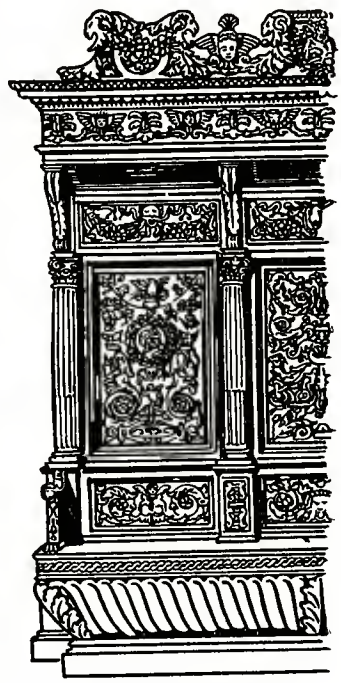
Italian decorative furnishing was pre-eminently *da pompa*, the appreciation of classic form and brilliant colour being little disturbed by considerations of comfort in the modern sense of the term until a much later period.



CHIMNEY-PIECE, FROM DRAWING BY SERLIO. THE GLOBE OF FIRE IN BAS-RELIEF ON BACK OF CHIMNEY.

SEIGNEURIAL SEATS

For instance, the antique X forms of seats resigned their position as appanages of dignity in favour of stiff and stately high-backed *seigneurial* and state seats, such as that of Lorenzo de Medici; almost identical in its structural design with the stalls erected during the period at the *Certosa* Pavia, Monza, Perugia, the Cathedral (Monte Alveto Maggiore), Siena, and many others of the Italian churches which demonstrate to-day the technical skill of the carver or inlayer as well as the prolific beauty of the style he worked in.



STALLS, ALTARE MAGGIORE, S. PIETRO, PERUGIA.

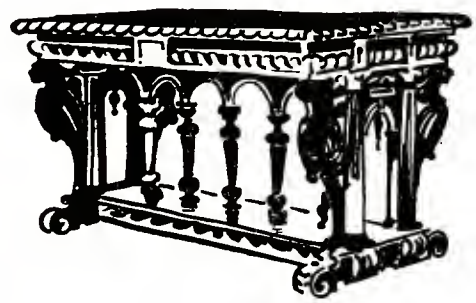
The earliest Italian chairs other than X are of the type illustrated in the two sketches shown on page 121 of pieces from the D'Yvon collection; virtually stools to which backs have been added, the seat being upheld at the front and back by solid shaped pieces splaying outwards.

RENAISSANCE TABLES

The typical centre table of the Italian Renaissance is of oblong proportions, supported at each end by a solid carved and shaped "console," or by linked posts (such as that in the Carnavalet table shown in Colour Plate No. 16), these end supports being usually united by a stretcher and arcade with smaller columns. The period is singularly rich in variants of this form.

CABINETS,

Which demand fuller reference at a later period when they become supreme as the daintiest expressions of the art of woodwork, were ennobled descendants of the chests, coffers, and *cassoni*, dating from about the sixteenth century. In its early forms the Cabinet is practically a chest, raised from the floor and disguised by the Italian artists by a surface decoration imitating the architectural details of temples, gateways, and palaces. It was not only arcaded, pilastered,—and "porticoed," if one may use such a term,—but inlaid in perspective wooden imitation of the geometrical floor patterns of the palaces.



TYPICAL ITALIAN RENAISSANCE TABLE.

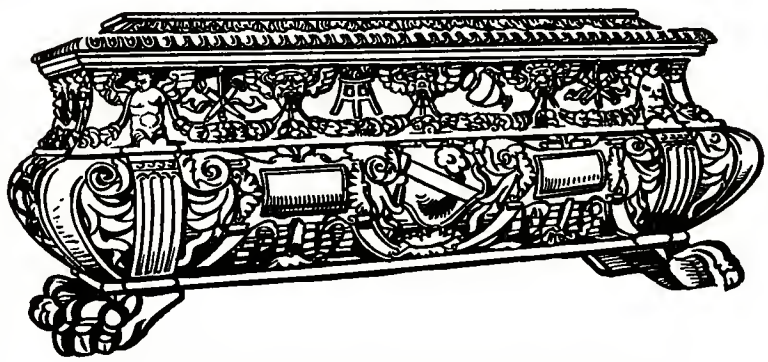
SIXTEENTH CENTURY CHESTNUT TABLE.
SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM.

CASSONI

The form of the ancient *sarcophagi* inspired the design of the *cassoni* or coffers, the lineal descendants of the mediæval chests, whose function it was to store plate, clothes, and other valuables of the home. When employed to hold the Italian brides' trousseaux it was customary to use cypress (or camphor) woods, as their aroma was considered a protection against the moth, and to line them with rich fabrics or skins.

The Venetians in particular

favoured elaborate carved work upon their coffers, with scrolls reminiscent of Raphael, and displaying the arms of the bride's family. In generous contrast to the Eastern marriage custom of ceremoniously presenting to the bride a magnificent casket (containing a few sweets usually) which etiquette demanded should be returned to the giver, the Italians gave the cassone itself as well as its contents. The merchant or noble from earlier days stored his wealth in the form of plate or jewellery, and consequently required (and had a real affection for) the *cassoni*; frequently placing several in one room, and retaining them as decorative pieces of furniture long after he had discarded them as receptacles in favour of *armidi* or sideboards, whereon his treasures could be more effectively displayed.

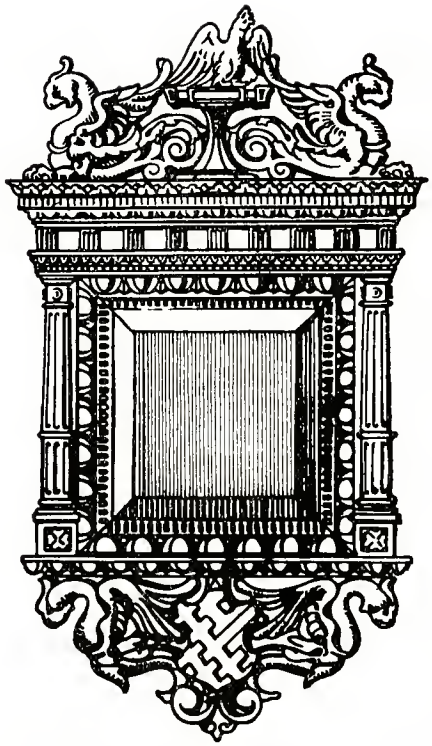


ITALIAN COFFER, MUSÉE DU LOUVRE, SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

Indeed, the Italians of the Renaissance lavished the whole resources of their ornament upon the adornment of the *cassoni*, — a degree of zeal which has led to their frequently being broken up in modern days, that their painted, carved, or inlaid panels may be adapted to other pieces of decorative furniture, or hung upon the walls in frank recognition of their pictorial art value.

FRAMES

Equally important as decorative assets to the Italian designer were the mirror and other frames. Though the Venetians were justly famed for their glass manufactures, the "looking-glass," to employ a Hibernianism, was still of burnished metal, decorated upon each side, and frequently made with a base that it might be readily moved from room to room.



CARVED GILT ITALIAN MIRROR FRAME.
SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

It is difficult to speak of exquisite pieces of craftsmanship and design, as are many of the carved frames of the Italian Renaissance, without appearing to entertain an exaggerated impression of their art value; but to the writer it is in such charming mirror frames as that shown upon page 118 that the woodwork of the Renaissance can be most appreciated.

BEDS

From an interesting inventory of the contents of the Medici Palace at this period, one extracts the impression that most of the apartments were equipped with two bedsteads—one a "four-poster" upon a daïs, the other a species of combined couch-bed and wardrobe.

BELLOWS

It is characteristic of the loving thoroughness of artists and craftsmen of the Renaissance in Italy and France, that an equal amount of decoration was lavished upon even such homely and utilitarian articles as the bellows. They were carved and gilt; grotesques, masks, and allusions to St. Michael being a favourite form of decoration. Probably its maker did not receive one farthing for each of the four

BELLOWS, SIXTEENTH CENTURY.
D'YVON COLLECTION.

PLATE XVII

PETITE CREDENCE, FRANÇOIS I

Musée de Cluny, Paris

Length, 3 ft. 10 in.; height, 4 ft. 9 in.; depth, 1 ft. 7 in. *Circa* 1520

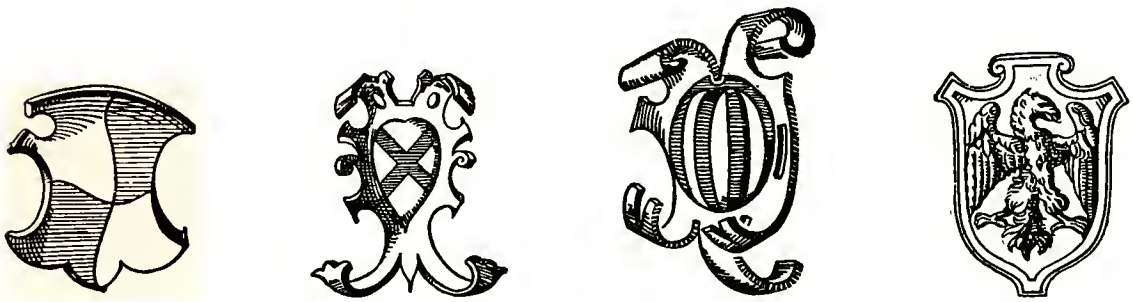
Though doubtless the official ascription of this piece to the days of Francis the First is accurate, yet in the spacing of the carving, the bold projection of the busts, and their semicircular-headed enclosure, its details are quite as reminiscent of the style associated with that monarch's predecessor Louis the Twelfth.

The contrast between the richness of the ornament bedecking the exteriors of those colossal caprices, the *chateaux* which sprang up in the valley of the Loire, and the gaunt severity of the stone walls of their interiors, testifies that the almost feverish haste in execution prevented the working out of the new classic inspiration with the completeness usually characteristic of the Italian. The foil given by the grim stone to the decorative woodwork is, however, not without a picturesque charm; absent when—as at Fontainebleau—such masters as Primaticcio, Leonardo da Vinci, and Andrea del Sarto provide sumptuous backgrounds.

The sixteenth century witnessed in France the full flood of the Renaissance; and furniture assumed its proper decorative importance in the adornment of the home.

hundred and fifty guineas which were recently paid at a sale for a bellows thus ornamented, but the materialist wastes his pity on him whose work brings "Eden to the craftsman's brain" in reward for devotion to his craft.

Under the inspiration of the Renaissance, learning and riches increased conjointly. Art being no longer the servant of the Church or the monopoly of the monk, sculptors and painters joyously designed vivacious house decoration for the lords of the purse, the merchant princes, and wealthy burghers.



SHIELDS DESIGNED BY SERLIO OF BOLOGNA.

THE STIMULUS OF THE RENAISSANCE

Was so widely varied in its influences and appeal that when architects think of the movement in Italy they usually regard Brunelleschi as its author; painters or sculptors refer it to Orcagna or Giotto; with literary men the credit is ascribed to Dante, Petrarch, or Boccaccio; whilst the decorative wood-worker attributes to such men as the Majani or the Da San Gallo some small share of the glory of the art manifestations of the Renaissance.

In these days of specialism and the human machine one is especially pleased to notice the versatility of the great artists of the Renaissance; that they were not only painters, sculptors, and architects, but were goldsmiths and silversmiths, engravers, glass painters, designers of furniture and fabrics. Such men as recreations became poets, historians, and musicians; whilst their frequent selection

by their rulers to fulfil the duties of statesmen and ambassadors, further vouches for the breadth of their intellects and outlook upon life.

The picture painter's brush and the sculptor's chisel were not the alpha and omega of art until later; it does not appear to have occurred to the artist of the Renaissance, who applied himself to sculpture, painting, and architecture as opportunity or inspiration dictated, that he desecrated his genius by giving it expression in the design or carving of wood; that was a discovery reserved for the artists of the nineteenth century.

The artistic impulse of the Italian Renaissance to invest every place and variety of work with the forms of art was so powerful that the very *entrêmets* served at banquets were modelled to represent historic scenes; and Andrea del Sarto did not disdain to design viands in the form of the Baptistery at Florence: whilst both sexes studied the art of dress, and chose that which best suited them in all seriousness, as a duty they owed to art and society, rather than to themselves.

That little was produced in Italy between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries, which is not instinct with art expression, is the more remarkable when it is remembered that the Italian peninsula was fully as much the cock-pit of Europe during a great part of the period as was Belgium in later days. Not only France and Spain, but England joined the Holy Roman Empire ("neither Holy nor Roman nor Empire") in the spoliation and intrigues against the Italian republics, and combined with the Pope to destroy the power of Venice in the League of Cambrai.

It is generally conceded that the Italian Renaissance ranks in its stimulus and importance with the finest period of ancient Grecian art. Our legacy of Greek woodwork is but small, but of decorative furniture of the Italian Renaissance from the Cinquecento we possess

PLATE XVIII

HENRI DEUX CARVED COFFER, OR BAHUT

Donation Sauvageot,
Musée du Louvre, Paris

Length, 4 ft. 7½ in.; height, 2 ft. 10 in.; depth, 1 ft. 9 in. *Circa* 1555

OAK SCREEN OF THE SAME FRENCH PERIOD

Victoria and Albert Museum, London

With a surface condition and colour as delightful as that of an old Italian bronze, this exquisitely carved coffer, or *bahut*, to use the conveniently elastic French term, represents Gallic craftsmanship of the sixteenth century at its best.

Probably fashioned when France was finishing in defeat her waste of blood and treasure in fighting more powerful Spain, receiving in return for her alliance with Florence the afflatus of the Renaissance movement in Italy; when Henri Deux was king, and Catherine de Medicis, his bigoted Queen, was preparing the tortuous policy which during her three sons' reigns so fanned the strife between Calvinistic Huguenots and papal Catholicism.

What scenes may not this piece have witnessed from its Louvre home, in far-off days when that Royal Palace seemed little likely to reach the prosaic calm of a national museum? Was it from the window near by that Charles ix. fired at the fleeing Huguenots at the Massacre of St. Bartholomew? Could Jean Goujon, the greatest of French carvers, have been seen calmly at work on the opposite façade until he received the fatal shot?—a

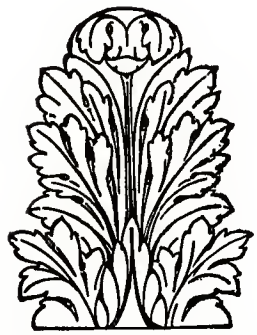
shot perhaps intended for another, for his religious views do not appear to have been prominent; unlike those of the Du Cerceau, a Protestant, the probable designer of this piece who, being forewarned by friends at court, safely "studied" in Italy during this crisis.

Of the numerous "schools" which flourished in France at the time, either that of Lyons, or (much less probably) the Burgundian, may be credited with the manufacture of this piece.

The Openwork Screen is of the same date—or possibly some few years earlier—and of the Lyons school; it is now in the British national collection at South Kensington, as is the *Biberon* shown upon it, of that rare Henri Deux china formerly supposed to have been made at Oiron, but now believed to have had St. Porchaire as its birthplace. As much as £750 has been paid for a small candlestick of this ware.

Edwin Foley. '09

ACANTHUS SPINOSUS, NATURAL LEAF.



RENAISSANCE TREATMENT OF ACANTHUS LEAF.

ACANTHUS LEAF.

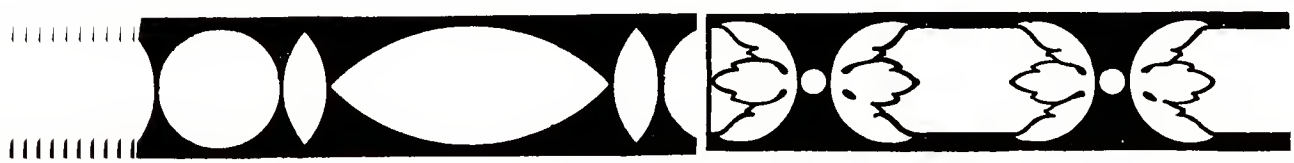
RENAISSANCE TREATMENT OF ACANTHUS LEAF.

ample remains to warrant the statement that if it derived in large measure its ornamental forms from the ancient Hellenic race, it breathed colour and warmth, craved for by the more western peoples, into the cold beauty of Grecian design.

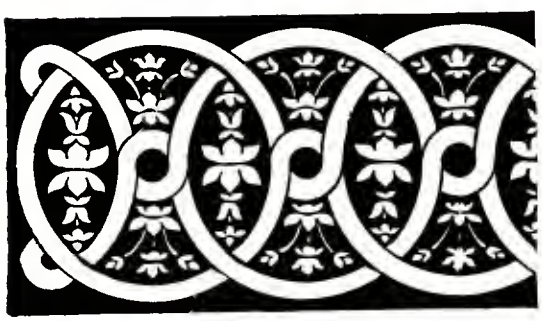
As one visits the treasure houses and State museums of England and the Continent, and reflects that only a fraction of the furniture can have survived the ravages of wear and war, one knows not whether to marvel most at the perfection of graceful beauty shown in the work, or at its relatively enormous output during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

One need not depreciate the culture and the arts of the Middle Ages in order to appreciate this mighty Italian movement, which, despite vagaries and the sensuous character of some of its chief patrons, did so much for human progress and the peaceful arts.

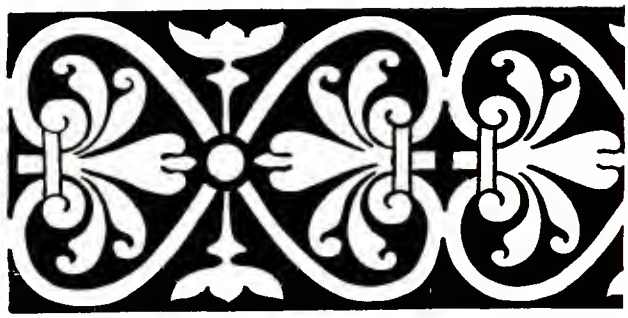
Upon its æsthetic side the Renaissance movement was an



THE ENRICHED BEAD.



THE GUILLOCHE.



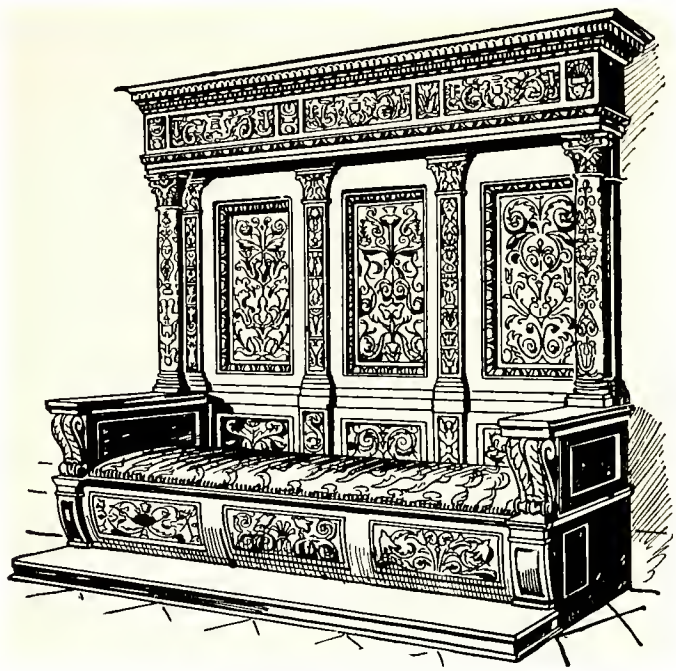
THE PALMETTE BAND.

endeavour to revive the interrupted architectural practice of the purest art age of the world, but (as was inevitable from the changed conditions) this apparently conservative idea became the root whence sprang probably the greatest innovation in art history. Its success is the more noteworthy since, emanating as it did not from the crude "inspirations" of the people, but from the enthusiasm of the studious and cultured, on the one hand the people had to be educated to the level of its precepts, and on the other the priestly authority had to be encountered, overcome, or conciliated. The shrewd rulers of the papal Church, however, recognised in the Renaissance an instrument ready to hand wherewith to aid the Counter-Reformation against the inroads of austere Protestantism.

This necessarily brief survey of the Renaissance in Italy until the conclusion of the sixteenth century is also necessarily incomplete. "The Renaissance was," in the words of John Addington Symonds, "so dazzling by its brilliancy, so confusing by its changes, that moral distinctions were obliterated in a blaze of splendour, an outcome of

THE ECHINUS, OR EGG AND TONGUE.

new life, . . . the national genius attaining its fullest development simultaneously with the decay of faith, the extinction of political liberty, and the anarchy of ethics." It must therefore obviously be impossible to render its complex and conflicting phases into small compass.



STATE SEAT OF LORENZO DE MEDICI.

CONTINENTAL CONTEMPORARIES OF LATE GOTHIC AND TUDOR PERIOD, 1475–1603

The Renaissance in France during the Sixteenth Century

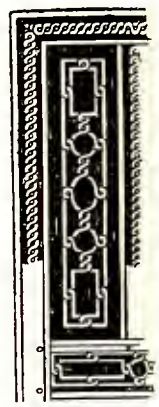
THE varied, virile, and vivacious productions of French ornamental woodwork, from the decline of the Flamboyant Gothic to the end of Louis XVI.'s reign, fall somewhat naturally into two broad divisions. This, the first in point of time and not the second in fascination, practically commencing with the whole-hearted adoption of the Renaissance upon the return of Charles VIII. from his brief but memorable Italian expedition in 1494, occupies the whole of the sixteenth century, and terminates with the advent of Louis le Grand in 1643. We reserve the last half-century of this first division for our study of Continental art during Stuart times.

OAK PANEL. *CIRCA* 1550.

If Italy produced the Renaissance, France christened it, rendered its decorative canons and forms into flexible terms adapted to the every-day needs and affinities of more utilitarian peoples, and thus did much to ensure its acceptance by other European nations.

CHARLES THE EIGHTH

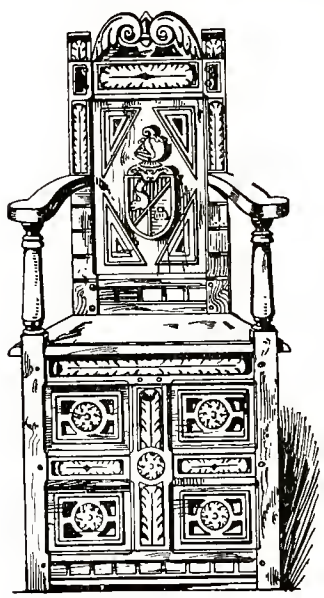
When the French under Charles VIII. crossed the Alps and beheld the gorgeous works of the Renaissance in Italy, they were conquered, as the Crusader had been conquered by the Byzantine arts, and the Roman by those of Greece. In the words of its audacious contemporary, Rabelais: "From this thick Gothic night our eyes were opened to the signal torch of the Sun."



DOOR PANELLING. FRENCH. VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM.

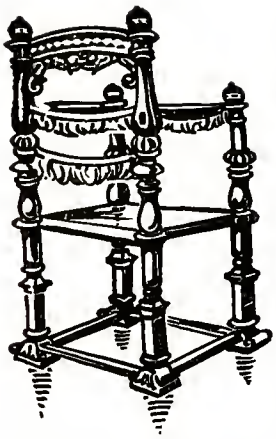
Nor were the consequences of Charles the Eighth's invasion confined to Italy and France; Spain, Germany, and Switzerland were awakened to the glories and wealth of the Italian cities, and commenced those raids and interventions which were largely responsible for the extinction of Italian freedom and the spread of Italian arts.

By the beginning of the sixteenth century France was absorbing the dominating impulse of the Renaissance: Charles VIII. brought back Italian artists to Paris; his successor, Louis XII., to Touraine; and Francis I., to Fontainebleau;—whilst the example of the Cardinal d'Amboise, who also succeeded in obtaining the services of Renaissance craftsmen to decorate his palace at Gaillon, was quickly followed by the great nobles and dignitaries of the kingdom.



CARVED ARM-CHAIR. FRENCH. *CIRCA* 1560.

That France, in common with other nations of Europe, needed the refining influence which the Renaissance undoubtedly exercised, is evident to the most cursory student of her history. One reads, for example, that it was the custom, when criminals were broken upon the wheel, to place little children in the front line of spectators, as a warning to abstain from evil courses!



CHAIR. FRANÇOIS 1ERE.

The humanistic light of the new movement shone upon art, literature, politics, and social life: even the wars in which

FRANCIS THE FIRST

became involved, increased the prestige of the Renaissance. Upon his return from captivity he induced Cellini, Il Rosso, Andrea del Sarto, and other Italian artists to visit France, and rouse by national rivalry the native architects, artists, and craftsmen. Responding to the stimulus, the French very soon displayed every whit as virile a conception of the new light as their Italian instructors; indeed, French decorative woodwork from the middle of the reign of Francis I., inspired by such men as Philibert de l'Orme, Androuet du Cerceau, Hugues Sambin, and Jean Goujon (all of whom studied in Italy), is, if less brilliant in colour than that of Italy, far more picturesque, flexible, and useful.

CARVED CUPBOARD. FRANÇOIS 1ERE. PARNHAM.

THE LOIRE CHÂTEAUX

Blois, Chenonçeaux, Chambord, and the other great *châteaux* which sprang up in the valley of the Loire, though mainly built

by a peripatetic company of Italians, are achievements absolutely outside anything in Italy: their crude but piquant coating of the Renaissance detail upon Gothic forms soon evinced a growing desire for beauty and proportion, while retaining the vitality of the Gothic.

BED OF CATHERINE DE MEDICI, CHENONÇEAUX.

Probably the craftsmen employed in producing decorative woodwork for the palaces in the Loire Valley were for awhile in advance of their Parisian brethren, but the sack of Rome in 1527, incidentally assisted the development of the Renaissance in France, as many artists were glad to find homes and welcome in Paris. Among the Italians employed by Francis I. in the decoration of Fontainebleau were Il Rosso, Vignola, Primaticcio, Serlio, Andrea del Sarto, and possibly Leonardo da Vinci. Yet when Francis resolved to make the Louvre his Paris palace he chose Pierre Lescot, a Frenchman, as his architect to build the south-west wing, and another Frenchman, Jean Goujon, to execute the magnificent carving thereon.

These are the days of the versatile

BENVENUTO CELLINI

the Florentine, whose autobiography gives so forcible a picture of the practice of the decorative arts in Italy and France at this period, and is so entrancing a revelation of his quarrelsome personality, that one willingly adds novelist, braggart, and fighter to his

laurels as engineer, musician, designer, and sculptor. Either Cellini's life was a romance, or his "Life" a romance. Its main events are, fortunately, corroborated from other sources, whilst other incidents are so manifestly of the Münchausen order of truth that they deceive no one.

During the reign of Francis' successor

HENRI DEUX,

the Renaissance was first established in its classical entirety: his marriage with Catherine de Medici assisting to fix the Italian concept, whilst Diana of Poitiers was also a friend of the new arts.

HENRI DEUX CHAIR. MUSÉE CARNAVALET, PARIS.

Virtually, the mode of Henry II. lasted until the end of the sixteenth century.

Probably owing to the domination of the author of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, the bigoted Queen-Mother, Henri II.'s three sons, François II., Charles IX., and Henri III., during their brief and but nominal reigns were conspicuous exceptions to the interest which the kings of France, however diversely moulded in other respects, have almost invariably displayed for the arts: an interest rendering the nomenclature of the style-divisions by the name of the reigning sovereign more apposite in French art than in that of any other country. Unfortunately, at best such labels are apt to mislead, since the personality, tastes, and means of the ruler may be no cue to the national character or domestic condition of his subjects.

PILASTER-DU CERCEAU.

The most distinguished of the native artists and craftsmen were Philibert de l'Orme, Hugues

PILASTER-DU CERCEAU.

Sambin, Androuet Du Cerceau, Pierre Lescot, Bachelier of Toulouse, and the great carver Jean Goujon, who is credited with having actually executed much of the decorative furniture which he designed for the royal palaces, and with meeting his death by the shot of an arquebuse at the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, whilst at work on the front of the Louvre ; a fate from which his distinguished and more fortunate rival Androuet du Cerceau, engraver, architect, and Protestant, escaped, having good grounds in the conversations of friends among the favourites of Charles IX. for suspecting the danger to which he was exposed, in common with his co-religionists, he thought it wise to journey to Turin, returning only after the death of Charles IX. He remained in the employment of the French court until retirement in 1584.

PILASTER-
DU CERCEAU.

PILASTER-
DU CERCEAU.

Though France in her first enthusiasm imported Italian furniture from Italy, throughout the provinces different.

PANEL FROM A DRESSOIR, FRENCH.
CHAMPAGNE SCHOOL.

SCHOOLS OF DECORATIVE FURNITURE

quickly sprang up, varying widely in their acceptance and treatment of the new movement. The chief were those of the Ile de France—owing its inspiration in design to Jacques Androuet du Cerceau—and that of Burgundy, under the mastership of Hugues Sambin, the pupil and friend of Michael Angelo. The southern workers of Lyons,

PLATE XIX

CARVED BOURGOUIGNON CREDENCE

Donation Sauvageot,
Musée du Louvre, Paris

Length, 3 ft. 10 in.; height, 4 ft. 8 in.;
depth, 1 ft. 7 in. *Circa* 1550–1575

Those latter-day levellers, travel, competition, and the printing press, in France as elsewhere, have destroyed the conditions under which decorative woodworkers flourished during the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries in Normandy, Champagne, Auvergne, the Lyonnais, Burgundy, and the Ile-de-France—the latter corresponding to our home counties,—forming schools which retained their traditions of technique and infused distinctive local conceptions into all their productions, remote from such assistance as would have been afforded by comparison or intercourse with each other.

Of the colonies of carvers in France and its subject provinces, the Burgundian appears to have been the oldest and most virile; its carved work, the counterpart in wood, of the robust realism which distinguished Burgundian figure sculpture of the period, maintained its individuality for at least two hundred and fifty years; the *dressoir* or *credence* here illustrated is stamped with this individuality of treatment. It is, in all probability, from a design of Hugues Sambin, who, with the first of the Androuets du Cerceau, gave the canons of the Italian Renaissance a form congenial to the Gallic taste. At the period to which this dresser belongs (1560–80) the grotesque combinations of limbs of the four-legged animal with parts of human and

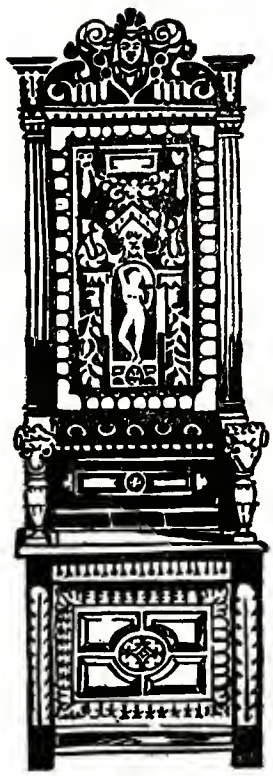
feathered bipeds,—which placed *dos-a-dos* form the supports and panels of the piece,—are cut with masterly skill. A somewhat similar *credence* of more formal design, but evidently emanating from the same school, is in the Cluny Museum, but is credited to the Ile-de-France by M. Bonaffé.

If refinement and restraint cannot be claimed for the carving of this *credence,* it is singularly picturesque and in accord with our modern concepts of the spirit of its times. Some pieces of old furniture such as this acquire with their *patina* an odour of romance so powerful that one wishes their mute eloquence might find tongue and appease our curiosity. One finds oneself musing upon historic scenes of revelries, gallantries, and cruelties of which it may have been a silent witness. Is it necessary to again note that much French Renaissance decorative furniture appears to have been both gilt and painted? The colours were probably too primitive for later owners, who had the paint removed and the natural beauty of the wood brought out by a little polish and much "elbow grease."

A *gueux* or foot-warmer of the period is shown upon the plinth shelf, whilst the two copper and brass chimerical monsters upon the top (somewhat earlier in date of execution) are *aiguieres* or ewers from the Cluny. The details of the wall panelling are taken from an apartment in the Château de Beauregard, *prés de Blois.*

Edwin Foley '09

Toulouse, and Auvergne, from their affinity and proximity, were naturally the more Italian in feeling; whilst the Gothic tradition lingered longest, as one would surmise, in conservative Brittany, where the blending of the new detail was both belated and coarse. In Burgundy, on the other hand, owing largely no doubt to the famous school of sculptors which had existed there for a century, the acceptance was more prompt, though free from servility in its choice and treatment of details, and generally akin to the Flemish; Burgundy, having indeed been joined to the Netherlands until the death of Charles the Bold in 1473. Hugues Sambin and Androuet du Cerceau published portfolios of designs for decorative furniture, and to them is due the distinction of selecting and evolving features from the Renaissance most akin to the French temperament.



SIXTEENTH-CENTURY BURGUNDIAN SEAT.

CHEST (ARC). MUSÉE DE CLUNY.

EARLY FRENCH DECORATIVE FURNITURE

Until the fifteenth century all articles of furniture in other than royal palaces or ecclesiastical institutions were roughly made and few in number.

The small rooms at the tops of the castle towers contained a bed, a *faldstool*, and a clothes chest. The stone walls were either left untouched, or whitewashed and hung with pennons and armour. In the halls of the more

important castles, however, the walls were hung with tapestries picturing hunting scenes or episodes from the *romaunts*. The poet perhaps conveys too flattering an impression of the floor covering of the earlier part of the period when he tells us that

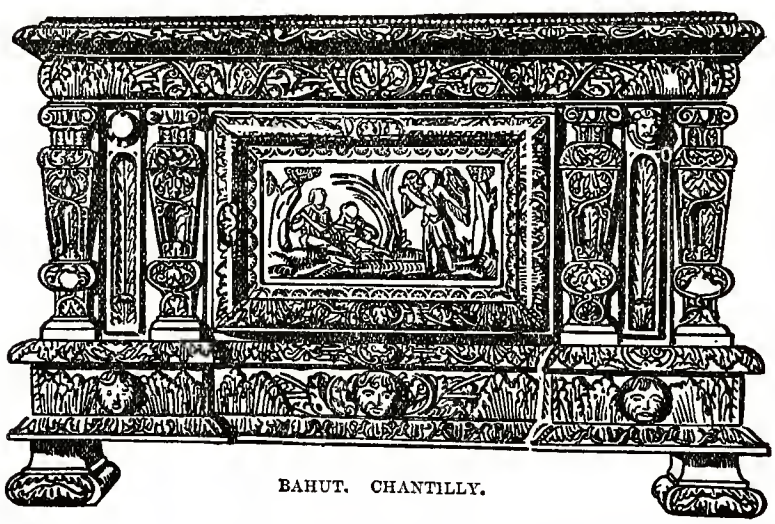
> All herbes and flowers, fragraunt, fayre and swete,
> Were strawed in halles and layd under theyr fete.

The openings for light and air were sometimes protected by frames "glazed" with thin horn or oiled paper.

The furnishing arrangements of the great hall in France were similar to those of England, *i.e.* oaken trestle tables with the benches at the sides, and at the head the seigneurial chair, which was frequently canopied with cloth of gold.

HUCHES AND HUCHIERS

In France — as in England — during the Middle Ages, hutches, coffers, or chests were practically the sole pieces of furniture in use, serving for storage, travelling trunks, seats, cupboards, and tables.



BAHUT. CHANTILLY.

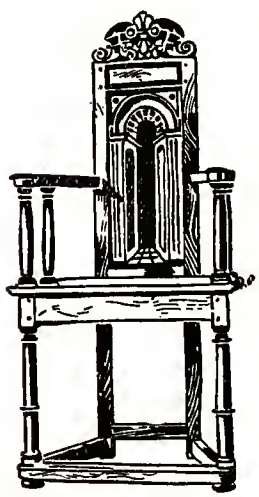
Coffre tres beau, coffre mignon
Coffre du dressoir compagnon.

If the sofa has had its English songster, the huche or coffer inspired a French poet, Gilles Corrozet, in 1539, to voice in some thirty couplets of his *Blasons Domestiques*, such as the above, its many types and virtues. Corrozet's muse at a later date was also moved to apostrophise the *dressoir* and the chair.

So important was the huche that the skilled woodworkers of France were called *huchiers* and enrolled in guilds. The sizes and general designs were prescribed, and the *huchier* was not allowed to set up in business until he had served his appointed years as apprentice, and moreover had satisfied the heads of his craft of his technical ability. He was enjoined under penalties to produce nought but good work.

CARVED WALNUT COFFER. EARLY SIXTEENTH CENTURY. FRENCH. MUSÉE DU LOUVRE.

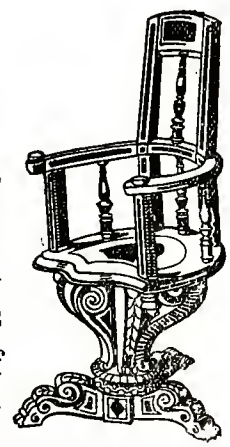
Although in modern French parlance the use of the term *bahut* is generally reserved for trunks, the word formerly connoted almost any piece of storage furniture: for preference, high coffers, such as the fine example of Henri Deux period shown in our Colour Plate No. XVIII., and that at Chantilly herewith sketched.



EARLY SIXTEENTH-CENTURY CHAIR. MUSÉE DU LOUVRE.

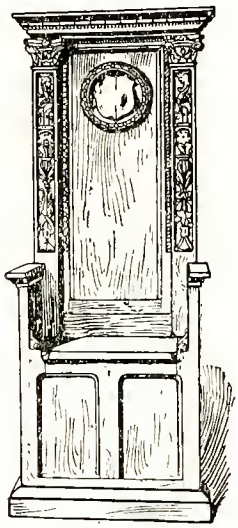
THE CHAIR

Though during the sixteenth century the chair lost its sacrosanct character as an appanage of authority, its varieties and numbers increased greatly. To quote again from Gilles Corrozet, the veritable poet-laureate of contemporary furniture, who, possibly realising how threadbare his craft had worn the more usual and unsubstantial fabrics of their dreams,



REVOLVING CHAIR. LATE SIXTEENTH CENTURY. MUSÉE DU LOUVRE. (*COLLECTION DAVILLIER.*)

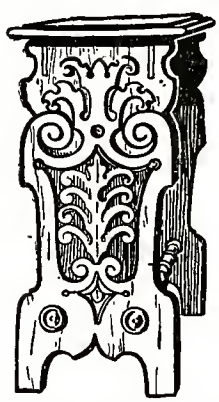
found adequate scope for his muse in cataloguing the solid results of man's ingenuity in decorative woodwork.



FRENCH HIGH-BACKED CHAIR. SIXTEENTH CENTURY. MUSÉE DU LOUVRE.

Chaire couverte à chapitaux
Chaire garnie d'escripteaux
Dignes de la langue et de la bouche,
Chaire compaigne de la couche.
Chaire près du lict approchée
Pour deviser à l'accouchée
Chaire faicte pour reposer,
Pour cacqueter et pour causer,
Chaire de l'homme grand soulas
Quand il est travaillé et las.
. . . . .
Chaire belle, chaire gentile,
Chaire de façon tressutile,
Tu es propre en toute saison
Pour bien parer une maison.

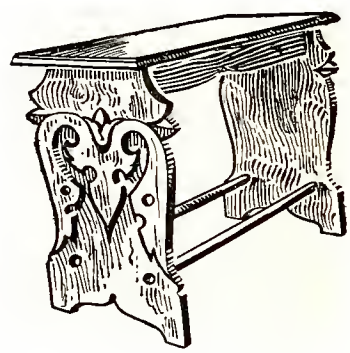
The chair *à haut dossier*, or high-backed chair, such as is herewith illustrated, was still reserved for the seigneur or chief guest, and *escabeaux* and *bancs* were still in general use. The *Prie Dieu* chair was further elaborated in form, and one is somewhat surprised to encounter in inventories of sixteenth-century date, as well as in museums, the revolving chair, or *chaire tournante.*



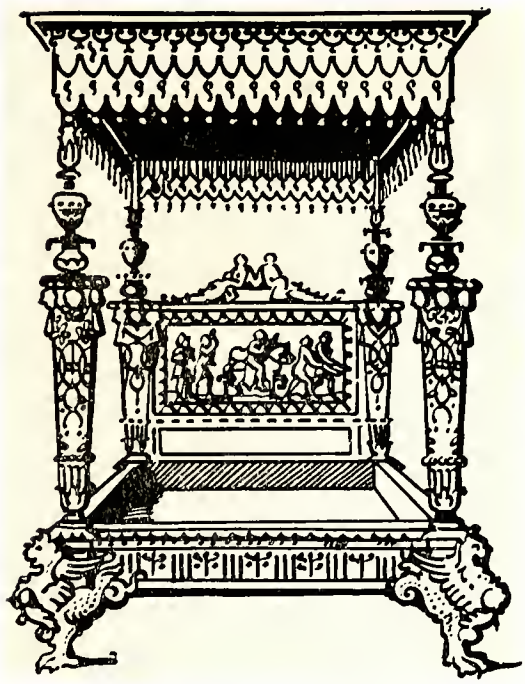
STOOL. SIXTEENTH CENTURY. FRENCH.

THE SELLETTE, OR ESCABEAU,

also known as the *selle* or *scabelle*, was the French equivalent of the simplest form of stool. Cotgrave, in his almost contemporary dictionary, even goes to the drastic length of defining such pieces as "any ill-favoured ordinary or country stoole of a cheaper sort than the joyned or buffet-stoole."



ESCABEAU, OR SELLETTE.



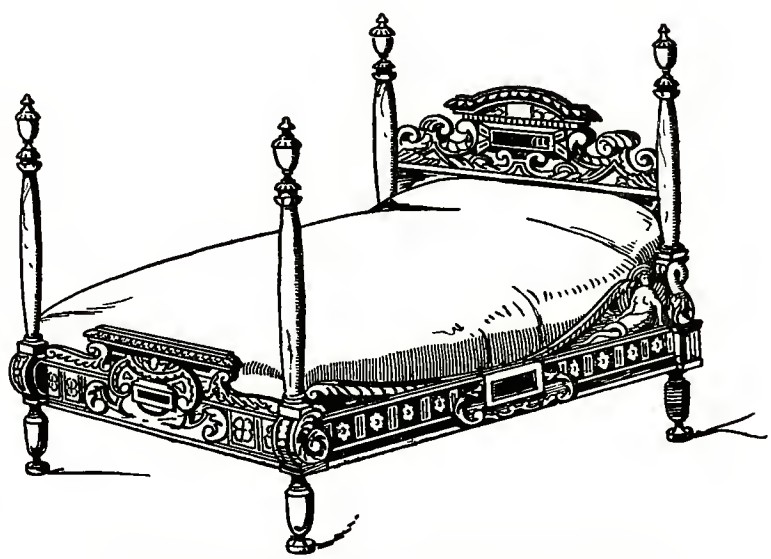
BED. ANDROUET DU CERCEAU. 1575.

BEDSTEADS

Bedsteads such as that ascribed to Jeanne d'Albret, the mother of Henri IV., from the Château de Pau (shown in Colour Plate No. XXII.), mark the transition from the enclosed form of bed built into the wall to more open and hygienic types of bedstead, in which four posts uphold the tester or *ceil*. The Du Cerceaus give several designs for "four-posters," but the bed at Chenonçeaux traditionally associated with Catherine de Medicis, on page 140, is an actual survival and of the greater interest. The *couchette* was a forerunner of the present-day bed.

FIREPLACES

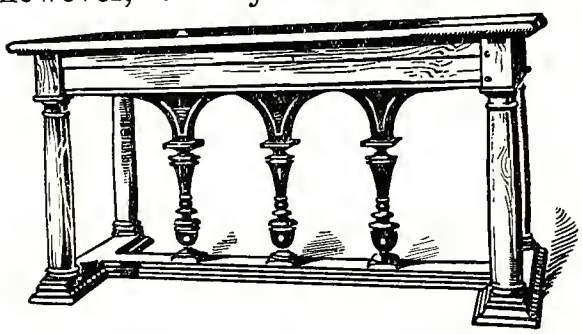
The massive hooded chimneypieces of stone, which dominated so many halls of the fifteenth century, were largely supplanted by carved wooden fireplaces of distinctly architectural detail during the succeeding century.



COUCHETTE (DATE 1583). CHABRIÈRES-ARLÈS COLLECTION.

TABLES

About 1560 the table *à rallonge*, from which our British draw-table was evolved, was introduced into France; the French table, however, usually had a colonnade placed upon the central "tread bar" or plinth connecting the end supports.



WALNUT CENTRE TABLE. LATE SIXTEENTH CENTURY. FRENCH.

Tables which previously in France, as in other lands, had been mainly of boards and trestles—readily dismantled and stowed away after use—in the sixteenth century become complete and framed pieces of decorative woodwork. The supporting ends of such tables as that in Colour Plate No. XVI. with the Liêge *armoire*, are so enriched that one scarcely realises immediately their direct descent from the *threstule*.

WOODS

Though, upon French soil, forests yet flourished and coal was unknown, one finds much the same fear lest the wooden wealth should give out, in France as in England, during the sixteenth century. For example, the potter, Bernard Palissy, says: "If ever I be lord of such land that is devoid of wood, I would compel all of my tenants to sow at least some portion of it. I have even wished to make a list of arts which would cease if there were no longer any wood, but when I had written down a large number of them I found that there would be no end to the enumeration, and after due consideration I came to the conclusion that there was not even one trade which could be carried on without wood." Since that day the discovery of coal has

PLATE XX

OAK CABINET, WITH CIRCULAR CONVEX PANELS, HAVING INCISED ARABESQUE ORNAMENT FILLED IN WITH BLACK COMPOSITION

ROYAL SCOTTISH MUSEUM, EDINBURGH

Height, 4 ft. 2 in.; length, 4 ft. 6 in.; depth, 1 ft. 9 in.

WALNUT CHAIR (*chaise sans bras*), WITH INTERLACED FLORAL ORNAMENT ON THE BACK

VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, LONDON

THE group illustrated is composed of French decorative equipments made during the reign of Henri Deux or of his three sons,—François II., Charles IX., and Henri III. The incised cabinet is apparently the work of one of the woodwork "schools" of Central or Northern France, and not later than the middle of the century. It formed part of the Peyre Collection until purchased for the British nation, and is a singularly happy conjunction of the serviceable and the artistic; a sturdy yet refined piece of design and craftsmanship, in excellent preservation.

The carved chair is attributed to the Lyons school, and one judges it to be the product of a craftsman of the days of François II., or Charles IX.

Owing in some measure to its having been left untouched by oil or polish, the chair has so crumbled from exposure and worm that it is now deemed prudent to preserve it in a glazed case.

That the panelling (from the Louvre) is of Henri Deux period is shown by the moon device of the Valois, which Henri adopted in signification that, as the moon displays its full glory when at the full, so the full valour of the Valois would be manifest only when possessed of his entire kingdom.

The embroidery (formerly in the Collection Sauvageot) was part of a bed valance of Henri Deux days. The probable original colouring is shown in preference to its present scarcely discernible hues.

rendered man somewhat more independent of wood, yet in the main the statement still holds good.

In the north of France, as in Burgundy, though much deal and cedar was used, oak was chiefly employed: chestnut and walnut supplanting it as the style progressed. In the south these latter woods, being more easily procured and of finer grain, were used somewhat earlier; yielding as they do more readily to the woodworker's chisels, they assisted to widen the distinctions in woodwork between the schools of Northern and Southern France.

CARVED WALNUT TABLE. FRENCH. LATE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

The secret of the delightful *patina*, or surface condition, at times like that of old Italian bronzes on many early French pieces, was the Gallic recognition of elbow grease as the best polish: their workshop recipe for good work has been much polishing with little "polish," the grain of the wood never being, in the best French polishing of whatever period, choked and obscured by thick layers of gummy chemicals, but repeatedly and gently rubbed down.

PAINTING AND GILDING

Whilst it should be fully recognised that remains of painting appear on some few pieces of early French Renaissance furniture, confirming the belief in the continuance of the mediæval and Italian Renaissance practice of painting,—the paint being removed by a later generation who appreciated their ancestors' design-forms but were unable to tolerate their childish colourings,—the writer disagrees with those authorities who, mainly upon this evidence, base the statement that the practice of painting or gilding was universal at this period.

The remains of paint or evidence of "pickling off" would, in his opinion, be found in a far greater number of pieces had the custom been invariable or even usual. One is, by custom, so habituated to the mellow, sombre gradations of the natural woods that it would necessitate a reconstruction of the æsthetic faculty to appreciate the fine French productions of the early Renaissance in their painted garb.

GUÉRIDON. CARVED TORTOISES AND SERPENTS.

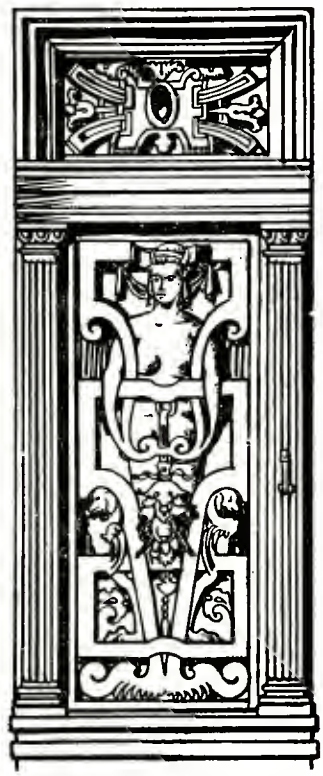
Remembering the convulsions through which France has passed, the survival of so many pieces of her decorative furniture of this era is even more remarkable than that of the contemporary châteaux, of whose equipment they formed part.

It is also noticeable that whilst the French craftsmen adopted the ornamental motives of the Italian Renaissance, they adhered to their old methods of expression, preferring carving to painted panels or coloured marqueterie; with the reservation that the use of inlays of precious metals, ivory, mother-o'-pearl, and of polished marble, lapis lazuli, porphyry, and other decorative stones, which under the title of *Pietra-Dura* was a characteristic of Italian cabinets from the middle of the sixteenth century, spread to France towards the conclusion of Henry II.'s reign, and continued until that of Louis XIV.

TABLE. ANDROUET DU CERCEAU.

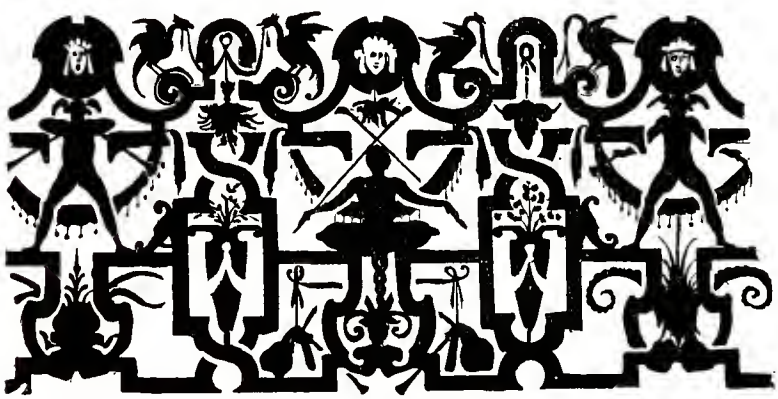
Though England possesses in her Wallace collection a series of mobiliary masterpieces from the period of Louis XIV., admitted by

French connoisseurs to surpass those in their national collections, the United Kingdom is not so fortunate in its examples of French Renaissance decorative woodwork. To those English lovers of fine furniture who associate the French genius in woodwork design exclusively with the "Louis" styles of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it is a revelation indeed to visit the woodwork collections housed in the old-time royal palace and present-day Musée du Louvre, or even better, in the grim old Gothic home of the Abbé of Cluny, now the Musée Cluny, and in Pierre Lescot's Hôtel Carnavalet.



CARVED DOOR PANEL. NIMES.

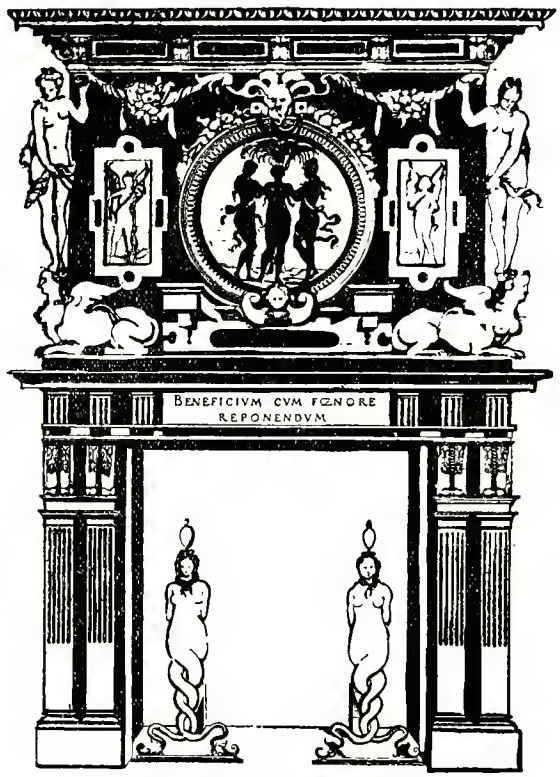
The most patriotic of Britons must concede that the continental craftsmen were as much superior in the exterior technique of their furniture to their English brethren during the sixteenth century, as were they in the seventeenth and the earlier part of the eighteenth centuries; still, — ascribe it as one may to insularity, heredity, or what not,—to the writer there is an appeal in the bold, free domesticity of English decorative woodwork which is not found in the more formal work of the Continent.



SILHOUETTE. ORNAMENT BY DU CERCEAU.

As previously mentioned, the more Italianate modes of Henri Quatre and Louis Treize days which covered the last half-century

of this broad first division of French decorative furniture will be considered in our studies of the continental contemporaries of our English Stuart times.



CHIMNEY-PIECE. LU CERCEAU.

CONTINENTAL CONTEMPORARIES OF LATE GOTHIC AND TUDOR PERIODS, 1475–1603

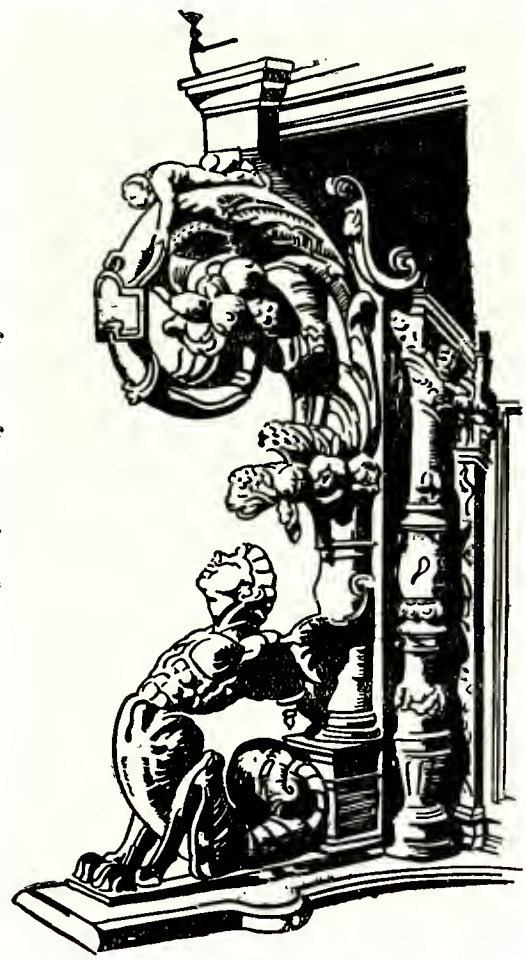
The Renaissance in Spain and Portugal

TO Spain, the land of old romance and legend, with its rival races of Jews, Christians, and Moors in unloving contact, the Renaissance was first introduced in the latter half of the fifteenth century, after Ferdinand and Isabella had consolidated the Peninsular units of the mighty empire ruled by the far-flung sceptre of Charles the Fifth of Germany and First of Spain.

The practical commencement of the picturesque Spanish Renaissance dates, however, from the beginning of the sixteenth century, after the reconquest of Granada.

MOORISH INFLUENCE

The Moslem occupation had continued so long, its Saracenic art had become so ingrained in the Spanish temperament, that it aroused no sense of incongruity when mixed with Gothic



BRACKET OF CHOIR STALL, SAN MARCOS. LEON.

ornament, and furnished a precedent for grafting the new interpretation of classic ornament upon the Mudejar-Gothic. Whilst recognising the tendency to unduly emphasise Moorish influence upon the Spanish taste, one must not disregard the fact that the Christians manifested their appreciation of the Moorish architecture, upon their reconquest of the cities which had been subject to Arab rule, by utilising the Moorish mosques as churches and employing Moorish architects and craftsmen in erecting and furnishing new buildings; unlike the Moors, whom temperament and religion alike prohibited from using the sumptuous furnishings employed by the Christians in Spain.

As one might expect from these Moslem art affinities, the Spaniards, ere the Netherlands fell under the Hapsburg dynasty in 1477, had been attracted by the florid intricacy and patient elaboration of the Flemish and German Gothic carvers, and when the three countries became fellow-subjects under Ferdinand and Isabella and Charles the Fifth, many craftsmen of both the Netherlands and Germany appear to have migrated to the Peninsula. Though they saw the ornament of the Renaissance long before it penetrated into England, the Spaniards appear to have been almost as leisurely as ourselves in accepting it; indeed, it may be doubted if the Spaniard ever cared for the pure line and refined form which was the message of the great Italian movement.

Woodwork plays so interesting and important a part in the chronicles of ancient Spain, that one would gladly exchange the sober task of endeavouring to show the evolution of Spanish furniture in more modern days, for that of following the fortunes of the Visigothic ark-chest in which the heroic Pelayo, the saviour of the Spanish nation, was placed by his mother; or of unravelling the design of the curiously wrought casket, forced open—to his own undoing—by the unfaithful Roderic, after his marriage to the beauteous Moorish maid who had been cast ashore. Perhaps the most wonderful of all the Spanish legends associated with decorative woodwork, however, is that

PLATE XXI

VARGUEÑO CABINET OF CHESTNUT, IVORY, ETC., PAINTED AND GILT WITH WROUGHT-IRON AND STEEL MOUNTS: UPON TWISTED, TURNED, AND CARVED STAND

PARNHAM COLLECTION

Height, 2 ft. 7 in.; total height, 5 ft. 4 in.; length, 3 ft. 9 in.; depth, 1 ft. 4 in.

THE art of the Moor survived and strongly influenced Spanish work long after Saracenic rule had been broken and the Moors stripped of their possessions on the Peninsula; indeed, so interwoven had Arab art become with Spanish tastes that Moorish craftsmen were allowed, even encouraged, to remain that they might build and ornament their Spanish conquerors' homes and public buildings.

Prominent amid the Hispano-Moresque decorative woodwork probably made by these Moorish craftsmen is the vargueño: a box with a door in front, evolved from the chest or huche, and mounted on a stand, such as the specimen herewith illustrated from Parnham—that treasure-house of good things in wood, stone, and metal.

Characteristically devoid in its upper part of mouldings, the Parnham piece is yet extremely decorative, its vivacious if bizarre colouring enabling it to bravely assert itself against even a background of rich painted and gilt *guadamacillas*, the leathern wall hangings which Spain manufactured with skill equal to the finest productions of Venice.

Shod at its edges with pierced ironwork and enriched with hinge plates—also pierced with arabesque patterns—the vargueño is largely indebted to the smith's art. The lock plate is a typical piece of Spanish metalcraft, consisting of balustered columns, the central baluster

covering the hasp. The chestnut and other brown woods of the interior fittings are almost entirely hidden by ivory spindles, whilst gilding and vermilion add to the vivacity of this picturesque bit of old Spain.

It has been reasonably conjectured that the vargueño cabinet took its title from the small town of Vargas, near Toledo.

In the Cluny Museum of Paris is a vargueño cabinet of somewhat similar design to that in the Parnham Collection, mounted upon a stand of identical design, though in the writer's opinion of somewhat later date than the chest itself. The design of the stand indeed, is traditional, and common to several existing vargueños.

Edwin Foley

of the table of Solomon, fashioned by genii from a single emerald, and so finely ornamented with jewels that "never did human behold anything comparable with it" upon a stand, one of whose golden (or emerald!) legs was sawn off by the Arab General Tarik, and produced by him at the psychological moment for the undoing of a rival commander who claimed to have discovered the table.

Love of the decorative arts was one of the few traits held in common by the mighty men whom nature in the momentous sixteenth century seems to have delighted to place upon the European stage. It is but seldom that such monarchs as Charles I. of Spain, Suleyman the Magnificent, Francis I., and Henry VIII. simultaneously appear; dwarfing even Cæsar Borgia and Pope Alexander VI., whose vices would at any other time have earned them a more prominent niche in the historian's chamber of horrors.

Hand in hand with the personal gratification in the applied arts of these great continental rulers and the nobles who were patrons of the Renaissance, there is good ground to suspect that they knowingly concentrated the movement upon the more abstract literary and art aspects in order to minimise the results of its stimulus upon the politics and religions of their days.

THE HAPSBURGS

The political grandeur of a monarch whose realms included Spain, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, and Sardinia; who had, moreover, in conjunction with Portugal, received the largest present ever made —that of the Continent of America, from its presumptive or presumptuous "owner," Pope Alexander VI., — and who was, through Cortez and Pizarro, to receive the rich treasures of this New World, made the art patronage of Charles of supreme import in the development of the Renaissance.

PLATERESQUE RENAISSANCE,

A term chosen from a supposed resemblance of its details to engraved chased metal work—although they appear really more suggestive of lace — was in vogue until the retirement of Charles v. from the throne.

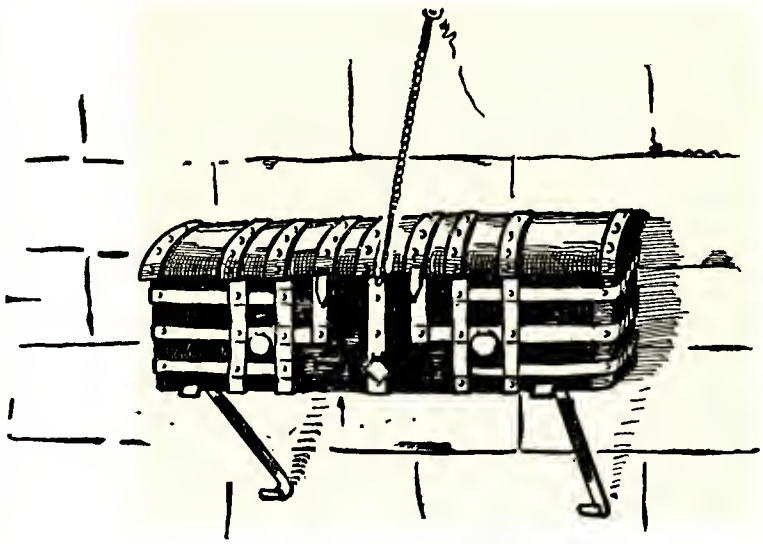
Spain refused, as did the other countries upon the introduction of the Renaissance, to straightway abandon her ancient art traditions, preferring to merge such features of the new style as appealed to her into her own piquant and, indeed to the writer, singularly attractive tracery, such as that in the chapel at Santiago, near the monument to the Constable. This tomb was originally equipped with life-sized mechanical figures, rising and kneeling at the celebration of the Mass! a *tour de force* which must have been dangerously disconcerting to the nervous, unwarned devotee.

SPANISH GOTHIC TRACERY.

At the summit of her grandeur and wealth Spain expended the treasures of the New World upon the arts of the Renaissance; indeed, the precious metals and stones were employed so lavishly that a document (awesomely named a pragmatic sumptuary), enacting that no cabinets, desks, coffers, bronzes, etc. shall be made of silver, was issued towards the close of the sixteenth century; by which time ivory, ebony, tortoise-shell, and various "fancy" woods from the Indies had been added to the resources of the Hispano-Moorish craftsmen when decorating their favourite chestnut or walnut woods.

CHESTS

The *caja de novia*, or bride's chest, was popular with both Moor and Christian. Large boxes or chests (*arcones*) seem to have been in Spain, as elsewhere, the most usual articles of furniture, and to have been popular from earliest times until the days of the *baroque* modes. The most primitive form is that in Burgos Cathedral, reputed to be the identical coffer which the Cid—that Bayard of Spain—filled with sand and deposited as security for a loan of six hundred marks from a Jew. It is fitted with rings for carriage upon the backs of sumpter horses.



COFFER OF THE CID. BURGOS CATHEDRAL.

BEDS

The bed grew larger and more and more sumptuous during the later Gothic times. Hangings of satin, brocade, and rich skins were used in conjunction with gold and silver embroidery, whilst a triptych or driptych containing the sacred images was placed at the head-end; balustrades of wood heavily silvered were set around it, and steps of silver were provided in order that it might be entered without loss of dignity.

These beds were usually placed in one corner of the apartment; in an opposite corner was the writing and dining-table, laid out with

napery including *mandibulas* (or "jaw-wipers," as the napkin was bluntly called), plates, dishes, cups, and spoons.

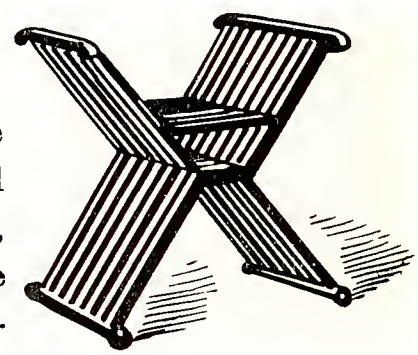
RENAISSANCE BED-POST.

VARGUEÑO CABINETS

The peculiarly typical Spanish cabinet of the sixteenth and first half of the seventeenth century, known as a *vargueño*, —of which an example is shown in our Colour Plate No. XXI.,—is assumed to have received its name from its first place of manufacture having been the village of Vargas, near Toledo. It is obviously a chest mounted upon a stand, and its details almost invariably show Moorish influence of the Alhambra type as strongly as that of the Renaissance.

The Spaniard has never been credited with an obsessing affection for work; he was a soldier at his best, and in this the period of his highest national fortune appears to have entrusted the making of his household gods and the adornment of his home to the Moor, the Jew, and the foreigner generally—importing much furniture from the Netherlands and Germany as well as from Italy.

CHAIRS

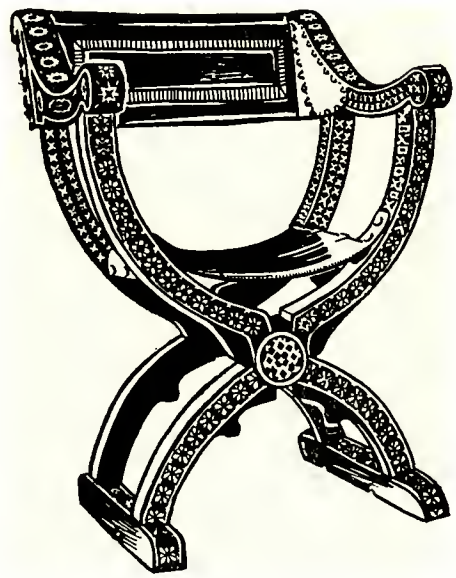


A SPANISH VARIANT OF THE X-CHAIR.

Of the type of the example on the next page, with minute geometrical inlays known as *certosina* work, were the more usual seats of the wealthy, but as might be anticipated from so grand—and grandiose —a nation, the seigneurial chair played an important part of the room's equipment; whilst smaller chairs with loosely tacked-on velvet coverings

at the back were provided for visitors; ladies using low stools. Members and friends of the household reclined upon the carpeted floor.

The craft of the woodworker was under strict surveillance and regulation. For instance, it was made compulsory to use the hides of horses, mares, and mules for the covering of chests; that of cows or calves being found to quickly become moth-eaten.



CHAIR, CERTOSINA WORK. TOLEDO.

It is impossible to ignore the *chefs d'œuvres* of Spanish woodwork — the Spanish choir stalls, surpassing those of Italy in richness of detail, unbridled by the sense of repose and breadth usually exhibited by the Italian work. Among the finest in Spain are those at Burgos, Leon, and Plasencia: the latter, by Rodrigo Aleman, perfect in their carving, depicting a number of scenes from convent life; some being, it must be confessed to the dishonour of the carver, of a Rabelaisian rather than a religious character.

WOOD SCULPTURE. S. THERESA.

IMPERIAL TOLEDO,

"The crown of Spain, the light of the World," possesses in its walnutwood choir stalls the acknowledged masterpieces of Spanish decorative woodwork; the lower tier, by Maese Rodrigo, dates from 1495, and commemorates the re-conquest of Granada by their Catholic

WOOD SCULPTURE. ST. PETER NATANO.

Majesties. Upon the upper tier Berruguete and Philip of Burgundy, surnamed Vigarni, half a century later contended against each other in illustrating scenes from the Testaments.

In the prison at Seville expired during this period a greater artist and sculptor than Vigarni or Berruguete,

PIETRO TORRIGIANO,

The Florentine sculptor, woodwork designer, and architect, who is credited with the most active part in the development of the Italian Renaissance in England. That he was an admirable artist is evidenced by Henry VII.'s tomb; that he was a man of ungovernable temper his alleged breaking of Michael Angelo's nose, if proven, would make equally evident; and that he paid with his life for a want of self-control upon settling in Spain seems certain. He fell into the power of the Inquisition for impiously breaking into pieces a life-size Madonna and Child, upon discovering that the Spanish grandee, for whom he had carved it, was attempting to trick him of due payment by sending bags filled with brass maravedi instead of ducats. Torrigiano was condemned to torture and death, and, though respited, went mad through fear of his sentence.

GUADAMECILES

The Spaniards' walls were hung with tapestries, silks, and with the famed painted and gilt leathers, known as *guadameciles* after their source, Guadames, a town in Africa. Woodwork contributed largely to the gorgeous *bizarrerie* of the wealthy Spaniards' homes during the early phases of Spanish Renaissance—which, however incorrect in an academic sense, from their mingling of Gothic, Renaissance, and Moorish details, possessed a charm lacking in the later classic formalism of Herrara, a pupil of Michael Angelo who commenced to build the gloomy Escorial in 1567.

PLATE XXII

CARVED OAK BEDSTEAD OF JEANNE D'ALBRET, DATED 1562

FROM THE CHÂTEAU DE PAU, MOBILIER NATIONAL DE FRANCE

Length, 7 ft. 4 in.; height, 9 ft. 9 in.; depth, 4 ft. 2 in.

UNTIL almost the days of Jeanne d'Albret, the mistress of a large castle possessed her own bedroom high up in the walls, and with windows opening on court or hall, frequently with small storage recesses. She virtually lived in this her bower or ladies' chamber. It was furnished with a stout bench on either side of the fireplace, and a cushioned *dossier* reserved for her lord near the bed, a simple table ever covered by a cloth, possibly a double *huche* or *credence* such as are shown in Colour Plates V. and XVII., to contain a few manuscript volumes, covered in leather and with clasps, which were the only "books" of those days, and probably more than one chest or coffer for clothes and cloths. Its chief equipment was, however, a carved or painted bedstead, the whole of which might be movable, except the heavy tester or *ceil* from which the curtains were hung.

This bed of the noble dame, who was Henri Quatre's mother, is an early form, but not the first of decorative royal couches. The important part played by the *lit* in French Court ceremonial will be found noted in the chapter on The Bed. From the far-off seventh century, when the *rois fainéants* of France, her Merwing sluggard kings appear to have perambulated their nominal domains in their chariot-beds, French kings and queens, whatever their

remissness in other respects, at least did their utmost to ensure the pre-eminence of their country in the furniture of repose.

England possesses nothing corresponding to the curious, elaborately wrought example of the French or Flemish Renaissance herewith illustrated.

The carvings and many-mitred mouldings of this bed have retained their crispness to a remarkable extent. Whether it be the real and veritable bed which belonged to and was in constant use by Jeanne d'Albret, its date 1562, carved on the lower moulding of the cornice, precludes the possibility of the picturesque and joyous original known to history as Henry of Navarre—and destined to play so important a *rôle* in the civil strife between Protestant and Catholic —having first seen the light from its protection, as he was then nine years of age.

The semi-enclosed bedstead marks the transit from the earlier panelled beds, *lits clos*, even nowadays found in some few remote Breton, Flemish, and German homes, and the open four-post beds familiar to English eyes.

The interior of the château has been so restored and altered that one can feel little certitude that much of the wall decorations of the days of Jeanne d'Albret yet remains.

Pau, so full of reminiscences of the kings of Navarre, derived its name from the "pale" (in *Langue d'Oc*, "pau") or palisade which surrounded the older castle, on whose site the present château was built as far back as in 1363.

Curious as is the Gothic coffer—alleged to have come from Jerusalem, and fine as are the carved stone chimney-pieces in the *Chambre de Souverains* and the *Salon de Famille*—the most interesting pieces of furniture in the castle are this bed, which tradition persists in acclaiming as that in which Henry of Navarre was born, and the *berçeau* of tortoiseshell in which he was placed during infancy.

Decorative Spanish furniture reached its apogee during the reign of

PHILIP THE SECOND,

The gloomy devotee who is as exclusively associated in the English mind with the Armada and the Inquisition as his spouse, Mary of England, was with "popery"; each were victims of their creed and concepts. Mary, it is true, from her marriage when thirty-nine, was also a victim to love for the cold bigot who at twenty-seven married her as a move in his high chess game for the advancement of Spain and Catholicism; a crime which England, under Mary's sister, Elizabeth, incidentally punished when they destroyed the Armada, and hastened Philip's retirement to a royal conception of the monastic cell, whose furnishings have been so carefully preserved.

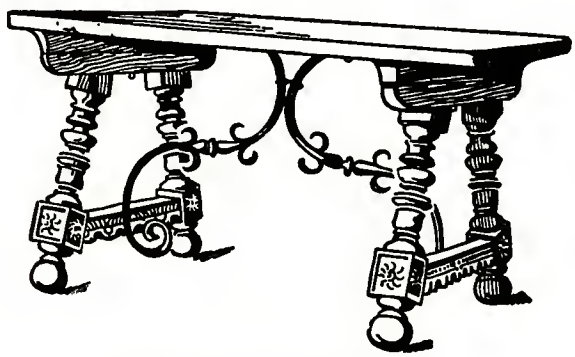
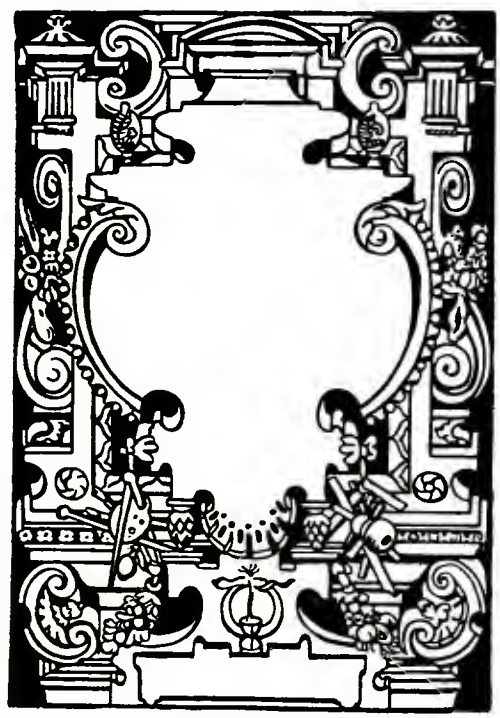


TABLE. SALAMANCA CATHEDRAL.

CONTINENTAL CONTEMPORARIES OF LATE GOTHIC AND TUDOR. THE NETHERLANDS AND GERMANY

IN a more altruistic age—of which few signs are, it must be confessed, at present discernible—princes and people will perchance, in consideration of the trouble they cast upon posterity paying them the compliment of trying to understand their history, refrain from the complicated changes involved in yielding to national ambitions and evolutionary instincts.

The many states now composing the German Empire, together with Flanders, Holland the Netherlands, and Burgundy, have been specially culpable in this way. This is the more regrettable since the decorative furniture of these lands was frequently in advance of both French and German work.



PANEL BY WENDEL DIETTERLIN.

IN BURGUNDY

the art of the *huchier*, the forerunner of our present-day cabinet-maker, had been stimulated at the commencement of our period by

the luxurious appointments and lavish display of the Court. One of the English visitors present at the marriage of his countrywoman, Margaret of York, to Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, a nominal vassal of France, and the real ruler over the greater part of this region, writes—

"I herd never of nowt lyek it, save King Artoury's cort."

Upon Charles' death without issue, in 1477, his duchy was annexed to France by the Eleventh and craftiest of the Louis, whilst

THE NETHERLANDS

proper passed (in 1516), by the marriage of Charles' daughter to the Archduke Maxmilian of Austria, to their grandson Charles v. of Germany and First of Spain (who was born and bred in the Netherlands), and thus formed part of the enormous domains of the Hapsburg Empire.

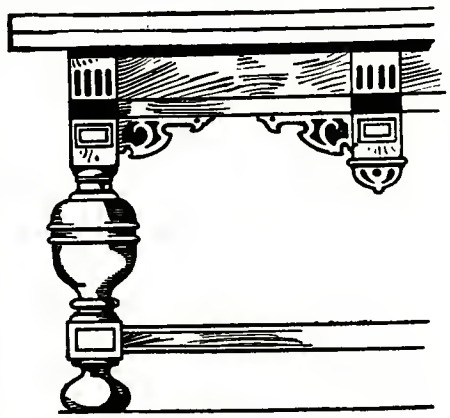
FLEMISH FOLDING TABLE. PARNHAM.

Revolting from the rigours of Philip II.'s bigoted rule, the heroic struggle of the Netherlands with the Spaniards, which ended in independence, was in progress throughout the latter part of our period: doubtless exercising a disturbing effect upon the manufactures and arts of the country.

Nevertheless, the population of Bruges and Ghent were each greater than that of London in the fifteenth century, and by the middle of the sixteenth century Antwerp had outstripped Venice as a commercial centre for over-

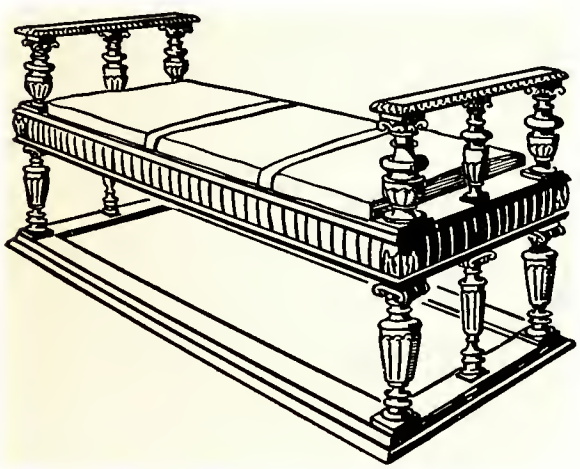
GERMAN TABLE, SIXTEENTH CENTURY. PARNHAM.

seas produce: "Venice is surpassed," wrote the Venetian Ambassador on visiting Antwerp in 1550. The wealthy burghers of these cities, with increasing prosperity, were indeed fully alive to the lucrative advantages of combining art and commerce, and encouraged the immigration of all who were skilled in the new industries with a view to breaking down Italian monopolies in several branches of art craftsmanship. It is interesting to note that among those thus attracted to Antwerp was Christopher Plantin, the founder of the celebrated house wherein now is the museum of decorative and historic furniture.



OAK TABLE INLAID WITH EBONY. HAARLEM.

From the Middle Ages the manufacturers of Flanders and of England were in constant communication and exchange of their wares; the more so since the religious and political aspirations of the two countries were also largely identical from the days of the Reformation.



BANC. FLEMISH. BONAFFÉ COLLECTION.

The tide of the Renaissance would appear to have reached the Netherlands somewhat before its arrival in Germany, but the influx was gradual, and almost half a century elapsed ere the national genius had assimilated the new style, and given it independent character. The narrow Gothic house with its "stepped" gable, so well-known a feature of Netherlands architecture, held its ground with the addition of a species of strap ornament adopted from the Renaissance, binding and accentuating the "steps" and yielding a sky-outline both marked and pleasing.

During the sixteenth century the materials and treatment of Flemish decorative furniture were so akin to that of France generally, and Burgundy in particular, that the review of Gallic contemporary woodwork will be found almost to suffice in conjunction with these notes, which must not close, however, without recognition of the absolute equality, technically and artistically, of Netherlands woodwork with that of France.

Such *tours de force* of Flemish work as the carved chimneypiece in Bruges Town Hall, erected in commemoration of the battle of Pavia and the peace of Cambrai are, however (as is the disappointing habit of *chefs d'œuvres*), less charming to behold than to read about: its life-size figures being gigantic but inartistic. A peculiarity of Flemish figure carving is the occasional realistically coloured painting of the faces.

IN GERMANY

Slowly filtering through Flanders and the then wealthy Tyrol, the Renaissance made its entry—almost as late as to England—into the combination of states then under the rule of Charles v. of Germany and the First of Spain; striking even deeper chords in the metaphysical Teuton than the sensuous Italian; stimulating the religious Reformation in the person of its great protagonist, Martin Luther, and inspiring Albert Dürer to design among his woodcuts (the "concentrated homely treasures of his heart"), those exposing the abuses of the Church.

CHILD'S CHAIR. GERMAN.

ALBERT DÜRER

The influence of Dürer as designer, painter, sculptor, architect, engraver, with his noble power of austere line, was paramount in the evolution of the German Renaissance. Decorative rather

PLATE XXIII

WROUGHT STEEL CHAIR

The Property of Earl Radnor, Longford Castle

Height, 4 ft. 9 in.; width of seat, 2 ft. 3 in.; depth, 1 ft. 10½ in.

Constructed of wrought steel, and therefore practically impervious to the attacks of time, this historic chair possesses at least one other claim to especial notice, being probably the most minutely elaborated example of decorative furniture in existence. The German love of detail has for once given itself full scope: scarcely a quarter of an inch is left plain, with the exception of the mouldings.

Each of the hundred and thirty-six cartouches, or panels, which decorate the four sides of the angle-set posts contains some half dozen minute figures: each cartouche is supported by two figures. The largest pediment panel (depicting a Caesarian triumphal procession) holds nearly forty horse and foot soldiers. The total number of figures on the chair is therefore considerably over a thousand. Each of these figures—often less than half an inch in height—is chased and modelled, whilst the frames of the cartouches and other ornaments are equally minute.

Only a series of full-size drawings could present the whole of the details; fortunately, the outline and proportions of this *chef d'œuvre* in steel are sufficiently decorative to justify its inclusion, apart from its minute decoration.

The authenticity of the following record of its history is incontestable. The chair was presented by the city of Augsburg, whose Arms are at the top of the back, to the Emperor of Germany,

Rudolphus II., whose bust is also immediately underneath the City's Arms. When the soldiers of Gustavus Adolphus plundered the city of Prague, they promptly annexed the chair and removed it to Sweden. It remained in the possession of the ancestors of Mr. Gustavus Brander until brought to England by that gentleman at the close of the eighteenth century, when it was at once purchased by the then Earl of Radnor. Its home for the last century has been Longford Castle, that curious triangular Trinitarian conceit in stone, with a tower at each angle, which John Thorpe planned at the end of the sixteenth century: a testimony that the craving for the quaint is not an exclusively modern phase.

The artist's name, Thomas Ruker, is signed on a plaque under the seat, and dated 1574. The subject on the left-hand side of the lower inset panel in the pediment (flanked by fluted pilasters) is Nabuchadnezzar asleep, and the subject-matter of his dream — the statue — stands beside the bed: on the right-hand side the King is shown on his throne, with Daniel before him expounding the true inwardness of the royal nightmare.

That exposition contains (is the reminder needless?) a prefiguration of the four great world empires: the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman; the relevance of the subject lies in the fact that the Emperors of Germany claimed to be the heads of the latter Empire. In further compliment to Rudolphus, remarkable leading events in Roman history are depicted in the hundred and thirty-six cartouches on the four sides of the posts.

Rudolphus, whom history represents as an anti-Protestant bigot, and a credulous seeker after the philosopher's stone rather than a triumphant warrior, appears to have received a more than usual amount of flattery, for in the Royal Collection at Windsor is a high bronze relief depicting him as a conqueror surrounded by Hercules, Philosophy, and the Sister Arts.

than pictorial (as indeed all the great masters have been), he was doubtless imbued, when apprenticed to painter Wolgemut, the founder of the great Nuremburg school of carvers, with the traditions of that school. His outlook was eminently Gothic and fantastic, and he returned from his *wanderschaft*—that essential part of the German artist's training—after glorying in the warmth and colour of Italy, to his Nuremburg home, to practise his art amid the domestic unhappiness so sensitively depicted in Leopold Schefer's book, *The Artist's Married Life.* He received scant recognition from the burghers of his own town, but was honoured in Courts, and presented by Raphael with sketches, to "show him his hand."

EARLY SIXTEENTH-CENTURY TABLE. FROM ALBERT DÜRER.

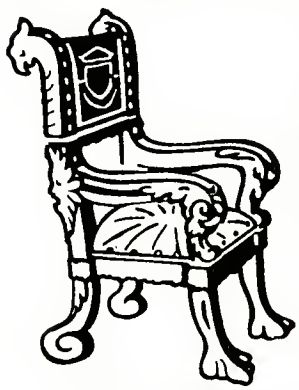
HANS HOLBEIN

Second only to Dürer, Hans Holbein, born in Augsburg, whither Italian architectural ideals had permeated, was far more in touch with classic culture. Holbein has been credited with much woodwork design upon somewhat slender evidence. He, however, found so little encouragement at home that, after illustrating Luther's Testament, he came to England, illustrated More's *Utopia* and Erasmus' *Praise of Folly*, and was appointed Court painter to his Tudor Majesty, Henry VIII.

CHAIR. HANS HOLBEIN. "ALTEM TESTAMENT."

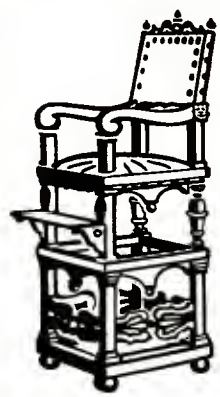
GERMAN BOOKS OF DESIGN

German artists and designers—as befits the land of Gutenberg—promptly availed themselves of the art of printing to publish their designs; the German pattern book being responsible, as we have seen, for much of the detail used during Elizabethan and James I.'s days,—in particular for the crude, meaningless grotesques which debased much of the English carved work.



CHAIR. DE VRIES.

In addition to Dürer, Holbein and Burgkmair, Jost Amman, Vriedeman de Vries, Wendel Dietterlin—the Du Cerceau of the German Renaissance, as De Vries was of the Flemish—and Peter Flötner, are among the contributors to these pattern books. Frequently their designs took the form of title pages, and these were culled from, without thought of relevancy, by the Elizabethan and Jacobean carvers.



SIXTEENTH-CENTURY CHAIR. DE VRIES.

Much decorative furniture found in Germany, and attributed to this period, bears every indication of Flemish inspiration; indeed, when exercised without allowance for the borrowing habit between near neighbours, dogmatism relative to the parentage of decorative furniture at this period peculiarly justifies Sidney Smith's definition as "grown up puppyism." The civil and Napoleonic wars in which Germany engaged during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries were carried on with so much ferocity, and the destruction of the enemy's goods and chattels was deemed so essential to their proper conduct, that Germany has probably

STOOL. PETER CANDID.

suffered more loss of her national woodwork than any other nation of Western Europe.

One feature of German woodwork of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries deserved especial mention: the iron mounts—locks, handles, and hinges—which were more developed, and continued until a later period than in any other country. Much ironwork and some furniture was exported to England and other countries by the Hanseatic League; a union of free German cities for protection and the promotion of commerce, which had now grown so strong that it could wage successful wars and almost command the seas.

FLEMISH CREDENCE. SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

The rugged vigour of the German manifested itself in his selection from the Renaissance of the harsh, the grotesque, and the laboriously intricate, rather than the beautiful. The Gothic forms have always appeared to the writer more sympathetic *media* than the classic for the expression of Teutonic traits, and such old pieces as the schrank, shown in Colour Plate IV., Part I., to embody the national temperament more attractively than the productions of a century later.

PLATE XXIV

GROUP OF LATE SIXTEENTH-CENTURY CONTINENTAL FURNITURE: PORTUGUESE CABINET OF CHESTNUT, INLAID WITH IVORY, EBONY, AND COLOURED WOODS, SPIRAL TURNED ARM-CHAIR WITH SILVER FINIALS AND NAILS

The Property of
Sir George Donaldson

Though Portugal was less affected by Moorish arts than Spain, Portuguese decorative furniture, represented by the inlaid cabinet shown in this Plate, is in other respects—as might be expected from the geographical and historical intimacy of the two countries—almost identical in its trend of taste with that of Spain. Both nations used chestnut largely as a constructional wood; both were partial to inlaid work in ivory, bone, and stained green woods. Another feature common to both countries was the introduction, in a species of simplified landscape, of animals, birds, and plants. An extreme instance of this treatment is afforded by a piece in the national collection at South Kensington depicting the embarkation of Noah's charges in a distinctly humorous manner.

Sir George Donaldson's cabinet of chestnut, ivory, ebony, and variously coloured woods and bone is in a more restrained and pleasing vein. Its drawer panels show a hunting scene with hares and dogs as the chief actors. The colouring of the inlays is not dissimilar to that of the English Nonesuch chests.

Twisted (*i.e.* spiral) work, used upon both the chair and the cabinet, was introduced into Europe from the East: upon its arrival on the Spanish peninsula it found prompt acceptance. It was probably little known in England until the marriage of Charles II. to Catherine of Braganza, when the Queen imported into this country the coloured and gilded leathers, the twist-turned spiral furniture, and other decorative equipment of her own land.

The vigorously carved heraldic animal occupying the foreground doubtless once surmounted a newel, but, deposed from its high estate, now serves with equal efficiency as a doorstop.

A CHAPTER ON THE CHAIR

THE mists of antiquity envelop the beginnings of the seat: indeed, it may be somewhat outside our present polite province to inquire minutely whether man's predilection for the seat of wood, as for other furniture of that material, is an added proof of his Simian ancestry, with its arboreal habits.

After the tree the ground may well have appeared to lack the dignity conferred by altitude, for who can say at what stage man began to assimilate conceit and realise the value of the high seat as an effective, if adventitious, aid toward the recognition of his superiority over his fellows? The early Greeks, we are told, regarded, as have other races in their primitive days, trees as seats of the gods.

It is of a stage in furniture evolution but little more advanced, though chronologically later, that Cowper sings—

> Joint stools were then created; on three legs
> Upborne they stood: a massy slab, in fashion square or round.

Supporting, as shown in old manuscripts, even such noble ladies as Constantia, wife of John of Gaunt, until—

> At length a generation more refined
> Improved the simple plan, made three legs four,
> Gave them a twisted form vermicular,
> And o'er the seat, with plenteous wadding stuffed,
> Induced a splendid cover, green and blue,
> Yellow and red of tapestry, rich wrought
> And woven close.

Such were the *tabourets* of Louis XIV.'s Court which, though seats without backs, yet were emblems of precedence for whose occupancy

noble ladies fought in fashion masculine. The survival of the expression dear to our public life, "To take the Chair," is evidence that, though ostensibly for rest and ease, the seat (until the sixteenth century), whether stool, chair, or throne, was formerly regarded as an emblem of the pomp and circumstance of state authority or private position. Those of the master and mistress of the house often bore their coats-of-arms or other device.

The seat is the symbol of nearly all public and vested dignity: the occupant of the most imposing seat, whether it be the Monarch on the throne, the Lord Chancellor on the woolsack, or the Speaker in the chair, is the head and front of the assembly. When kings, bishops, or nobles travelled, their folding chairs (*faldisterium*) were essential parts of their equipages. Mary of Scotland prepared to receive sentence of death "seated on an armchair."

THE BUDSTICK

Further evidence of the widespread regard for the chair as the symbol of authority is given by the custom in Norway, until almost present days, of placing the budstick (a hollowed piece of wood in which letters upon urgent public affairs were enclosed for conveniently carrying from house to house upon the mountains by relays of messengers) upon the "housefather's great chair by the fireside" if the family were away from home.

SEATS ORIENTAL

Among the Oriental races the raised seat is still regarded solely as an emblem of honour or dignity, and is sat upon cross-legged, the greater rest to the joints and muscles of the legs afforded by the Western seat being quite ignored.

The Great Throne of Persia and the State Chairs of Indian

potentates are instances of cross-legged seats. Indeed, the Eastern affection for the cross-legged position is so ingrained that, when suites of European furniture are purchased and installed in reception rooms for the edification and impressing of visitors, their owners frequently prefer to sit upon the floor in front.

Man, having discovered in his march towards civilization and effeminacy, that it was unpleasant to rest long upon a hard surface, had resource to resilient and soft materials,—to skins, cane, cushions, and upholstery.

The successive stages in the chronicle of the seat, whether stool, stall, throne, or chair, from the *diphros* of the Egyptian to the *cacqueteuse* of sixteenth-century France, having been treated under their appropriate periods, we may now accept distinguished help in a search for the first principles of the ideal chair.

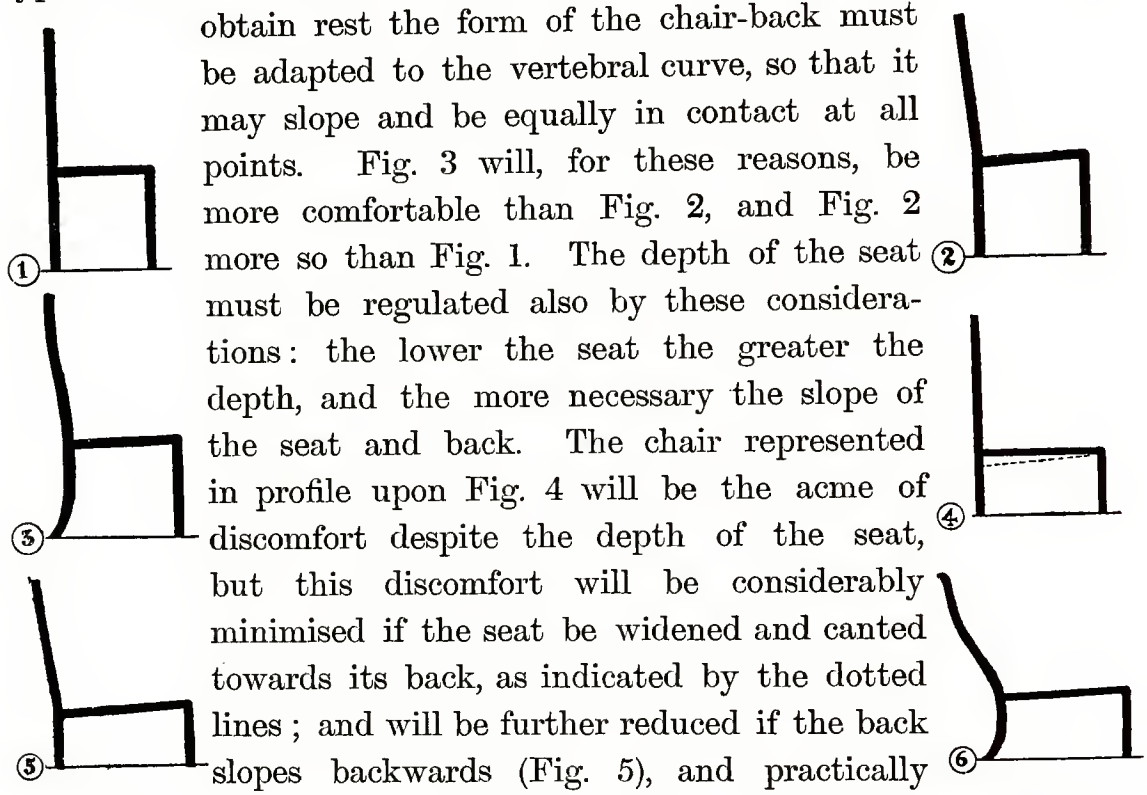
Premising that the chair is—or should be—more comfortable than the stool, because of the addition of a back, and that the arms should add to the comfort,

HERBERT SPENCER,

in one of those rare moments when philosophers condescend to be practical, lays down guiding principles for designing the truly easy chair. In his Essays on Sociology he says: "Ease is to be gained by making the shapes and relative inclinations of the seat and back such as will evenly distribute the weight of the trunk and limbs over the widest possible supporting surface, and with the least straining of the parts out of their natural attitudes, and yet only now, after these thousands of years of civilization, are there being reached, and that not rationally, but empirically, approximations of the structure required."

Applying these principles we find: to be comfortable on sitting down, one's feet must just touch the ground, so that the most fitting

height for the seat is between fifteen and eighteen inches. The next consideration is the ease of the back; that will be partly attained if the seat slopes downwards towards its back, assisting to throw the vertebral column out of the perpendicular, as in Fig. 2. One must indeed be tired to be rested by a chair of the type of Fig. 1, built in evident disregard of the axiom that to obtain rest the form of the chair-back must be adapted to the vertebral curve, so that it may slope and be equally in contact at all points. Fig. 3 will, for these reasons, be more comfortable than Fig. 2, and Fig. 2 more so than Fig. 1. The depth of the seat must be regulated also by these considerations: the lower the seat the greater the depth, and the more necessary the slope of the seat and back. The chair represented in profile upon Fig. 4 will be the acme of discomfort despite the depth of the seat, but this discomfort will be considerably minimised if the seat be widened and canted towards its back, as indicated by the dotted lines; and will be further reduced if the back slopes backwards (Fig. 5), and practically abolished if the seat be slightly raised in front and adapted in its back to the vertebral curve as in Fig. 6. The discomfort of seats with insufficient depth, and backs absolutely at right angles to the seat, is exemplified in the average church pew; and is, of course justifiably, indeed admirably, designed for penitential and anti-soporific purposes. The curve of the ribs must also be considered in the rails of a chair back: they also should be curved,—the departure from abstract constructional principles is justified by the necessity. If arms are added they should not be more than



ten inches above the seat, and, though the farthingale chair need not be literally copied, courtesy may be shown by making allowances for the (at times) ample skirts of the gentler sex by setting back the support of the chair arm.

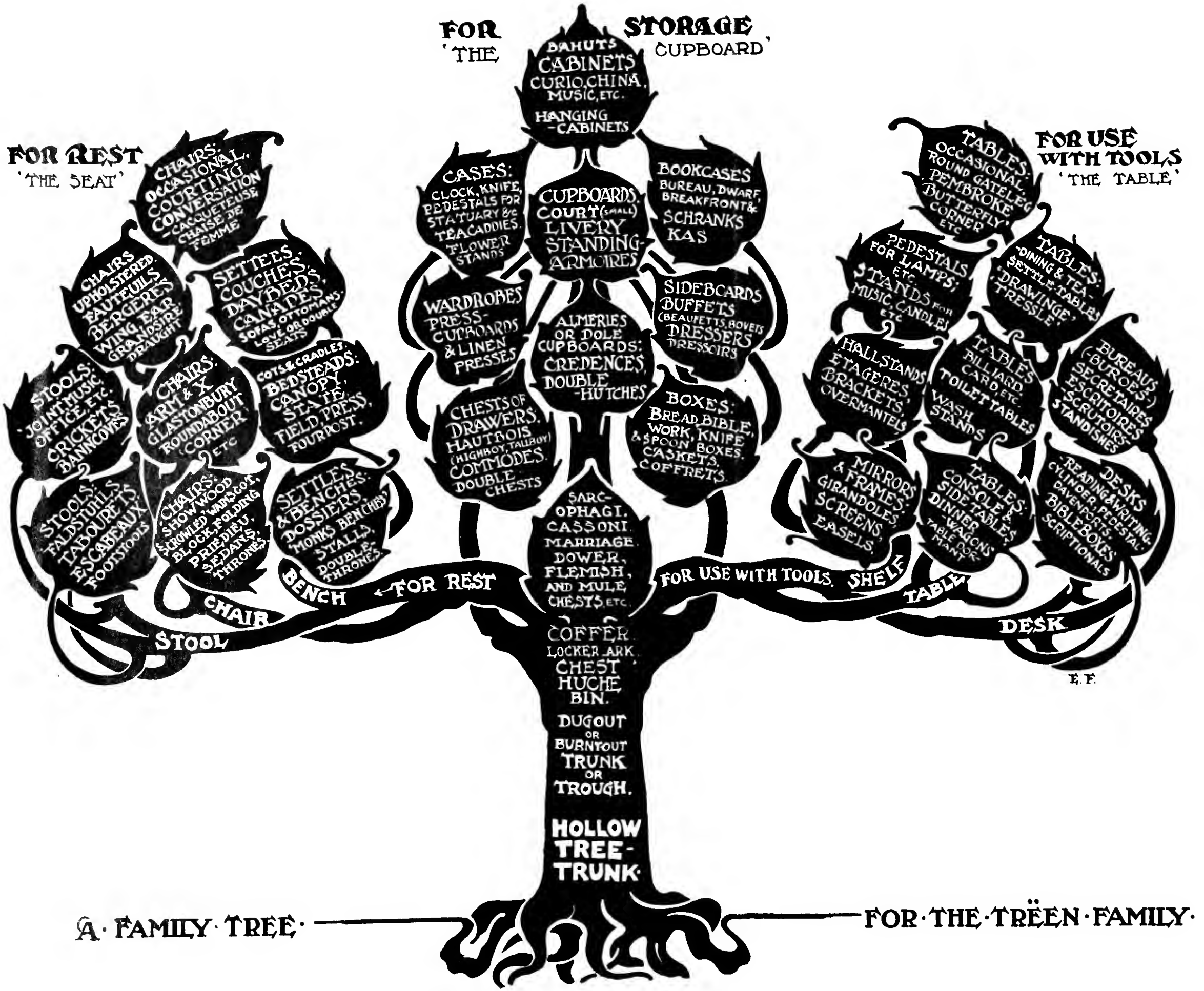
Akin to these considerations is the hygiene of attitude in sitting. It is curious that in the formidable literature now provided by medical writers for the enjoyment of the nervous, the many dyspeptic troubles traceable to the relaxed position in which average humanity sits have not received due attention; from the health point of view, the nearly perpendicular back for occasional spinal discipline has much to recommend it.

Among the sacrosanct paradoxes which trade tradition has evolved is that permitting to the typical dining-room chair a stretcher or under rails connecting the legs, whilst denying this strengthening to the more lightly built drawing-room chair. One of the two reasons dictating the provision of a stretcher (*i.e.* that the sitter might elevate his feet from the damp or draughty floor) has now practically ceased to exist, the other remains in full force. Though men no longer wear armour and are more gentle than in Tudor times, it is still quite necessary to secure strength and rigidity in the front legs of the chair. The legs of most modern chairs rely entirely upon their strength at one (the upper) end, whereas the legs of the sixteenth century chair were secured at both top and bottom; and as the stretcher rails connecting the legs act as both struts and ties, the chair was prepared for any accident or jar, such as its being suddenly overturned.

The old wainscot chairs were extremely heavy. It is not a bad rule to remember that the heavier the underframing of a chair, the earlier its probable period.

It appears possible that in his quest of the comfortable, man —measured by the advanced upholsterer for his easy-chair as for his clothes—will be required in addition to submit to being weighed,

and the incidence of his adipose tissue noted, that the necessary resilience may be calculated with greater exactitude than by present empirical methods; after which it were but an easy stage to the adoption of the humorist's suggestion that a cast should be taken of the luxury-lover in his desired attitude, and the chair designed to accord.


FOR 'THE STORAGE CUPBOARD'
BAHUTS CABINETS CURIO, CHINA, MUSIC, ETC. HANGING-CABINETS
CASES: CLOCK, KNIFE, PEDESTALS FOR STATUARY &c TEA CADDIES. FLOWER STANDS
CUPBOARDS. COURT (SMALL) LIVERY STANDING-ARMOIRES
BOOKCASES BUREAU, DWARF, BREAKFRONT & SCHRANKS KAS
WARDROBES PRESS-CUPBOARDS & LINEN PRESSES
ALMERIES OR DOLE CUPBOARDS: CREDENCES, DOUBLE-HUTCHES
SIDEBOARDS BUFFETS (BEAUFETTS, BOVETS) DRESSERS DRESSOIRS
CHESTS OF DRAWERS. HAUTBOIS (HIGHBOY, TALLBOY) COMMODES. DOUBLE CHESTS
BOXES: BREAD, BIBLE, WORK, KNIFE & SPOON BOXES. CASKETS, COFFRETS.
SARCOPHAGI. CASSONI. MARRIAGE. DOWER, FLEMISH, AND MULE CHESTS. ETC.
COFFER. LOCKER. ARK. CHEST. HUCHE. BIN.
DUGOUT OR BURNTOUT TRUNK OR TROUGH.
HOLLOW TREE-TRUNK
FOR REST 'THE SEAT'
CHAIRS: OCCASIONAL. COURTING. CONVERSATION -CAQUETEUSE. CHAISE DE FEMME
CHAIRS: UPHOLSTERED. FAUTEUILS. BERGERES. WING. EAR. GRANDISIRE. DRAUGHT
SETTEES. COUCHES. DAYBEDS. CANAPES. SOFAS. OTTOMANS. LOVE OR DOUBLE SEATS
STOOLS: JOINT. MUSIC. OFFICE. ETC. CRICKETS. BANNCOVES
CHAIRS: ARM & X. GLASTONBURY. ROUNDABOUT (CORNER) ETC
COTS & CRADLES. BEDSTEADS: CANOPY, STATE, FIELD, PRESS, FOURPOST.
STOOLS: FALDSTUHLS. TABOURETS. ESCABEAUX. FOOTSTOOLS
CHAIRS: SHOWWOOD. SCROWLED. WAINSCOT. BLOCK. FOLDING. PRIEDIEU. SEDANS. THRONES.
SETTLES & BENCHES: DOSSIERS. MONKS BENCH. STALLS. DOUBLE-THRONES.
FOR USE WITH TOOLS 'THE TABLE'
TABLES: OCCASIONAL. ROUND. GATELEG. PEMBROKE. BUTTERFLY. CORNER ETC
PEDESTALS FOR LAMPS, ETC. STANDS FOR MUSIC, CANDLES ETC
TABLES: DINING & TEA-SETTLE. TABLES. 'DRAWING' TRESSLE.
HALLSTANDS. ETAGERES. BRACKETS. OVERMANTELS
TABLES: BILLIARD. CARD ETC. TOILET TABLES. WASH STANDS
BUREAUS (BUROES) SECRETAIRES. ESCRITOIRES. SCRUTOIRES. STANDISHES
MIRRORS & FRAMES. GIRANDOLES. SCREENS. EASELS.
TABLES: CONSOLE. SIDE TABLES. DINNER-WAGONS. TABLE DORMANT
DESKS READING & WRITING. CYLINDER. PEDESTAL. DAVENPORTS. BIBLE BOXES. SCRIPTIONALS
BENCH
CHAIR
STOOL
FOR REST
FOR USE WITH TOOLS.
SHELF
TABLE
DESK
E. F.

A · FAMILY · TREE · — FOR · THE · TRËEN · FAMILY ·

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PLATE XXV

SOME CONSTRUCTIONAL AND DECORATIVE WOODS IN VOGUE DURING THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

This, the second of the series of four colour plates showing the characteristic grain-markings of thirty-six varieties of constructional and decorative woods, has, in common with the rest of the series, been photographed from the actual woods without exaggeration or manipulation in any way of the distinctive features of the grain.

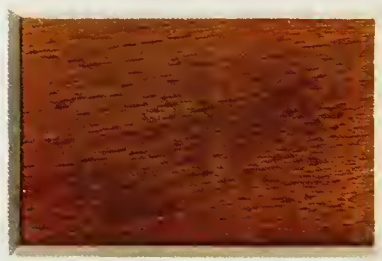
The plate overleaf represents woods which, in addition to some of those illustrated in Colour Plate No. I., were more particularly in demand during the Stuart period and the days of William the Stadtholder.

Further plates of woods appear in Parts XII. and XVI., whilst in the latter number and Part XV. will be found a chapter on woods and a chart tabulating the chief characteristics of thirty of the principal trees used in the production of furniture.

PEAR

CHERRY

LIME



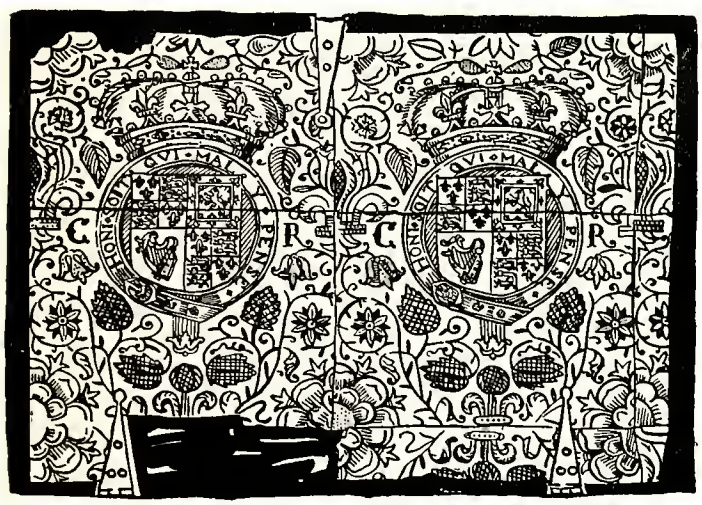
ROSEWOOD

BIRCH

THE STUART PERIOD OF BRITISH DECORATIVE WOODWORK, 1603-1688

JACOBEAN, CROMWELLIAN, CAROLEAN

WE now move forward to the era of the art-loving Stuarts, who, much preferring pictures to politics, poetry to Puritanism, were but ill-equipped for the great conflict with their Parliament, which turned men's activities from the gentle arts to brutal forces, and formed the central issue in English life during the seventeenth century, as the Wars of the Roses had been in the fifteenth.



CHARLES I. "WALL-PAPER" LINING OF A BIBLE-BOX.
(*Property of* DR. GUTHRIE.)

The lover of decorative furniture will find the Stuart period peculiarly rich in picturesque and rapidly evolving woodwork design. He will, however, miss from this chapter somewhat of the note of sturdy national growth traceable through Tudor days of Britain's crude but vigorous adaptation of the ornament of the Italian Renaissance: that movement which in art, almost as much as in letters, revolutionised the outlook, substituted reason

for authority, examination for acceptance, and abstract beauty for symbolism and parable.

With Inigo Jones as interpreter during the earlier, and Sir Christopher Wren during the latter part of our period, England, gradually laying aside her Elizabethan tastes, commenced an architectural flirtation, rudely interrupted by the Civil War and Commonwealth, with purer phases of the classic revival.

The period is conveniently divisible in the styles of its furniture—as well as architecturally and politically—into three sections:—

I. 1603–1649, *i.e.* from the commencement of the reign of James I. of England until the end of Charles I.,—the period to which the term Jacobean is often restricted, and during which the furniture which we regard as typically Jacobean was produced.

II. 1649–1660. The period of the Commonwealth.

III. 1660–1688. From the arrival of Charles II. to the arrival of William of Orange.

STUART FURNITURE DIVISIONS

FACSIMILE SKETCHES OF PANELS BY INIGO JONES.

One does well, when desirous to speak concisely of the furniture in vogue from 1603 to 1688, to describe it as Jacobean if made during the reigns of James I. and Charles I.; Commonwealth or Cromwellian, if of the days of the Lord Protector; and Carolean, or Charles II., when of the "Merrie Monarch's" period.

The decorative furniture characteristic of these

three periods is almost as radically dissimilar as were the rulers whose names are used as style-labels to the pieces. A right-royally upholstered chair of early Jacobean days bears as much resemblance to a leathern Commonwealth chair as did James I. to the only Cromwell who counted in seventeenth-century politics. A parti-coloured inlaid cupboard bedecked with many woods, a sofa or day-bed, of Charles II.'s days, was as like a typical Cromwellian cupboard or settle, as were the gay dandies of the Court to the grim Roundheads of the Parliament.

The merging of Elizabethan into early Stuart was so gradual that for many years after Inigo Jones' advent the old style was practised without any substantial alterations.

THE STUARTS

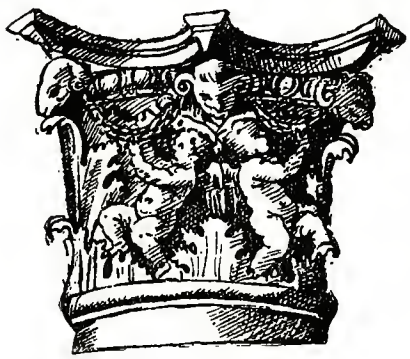
Around the Stuarts—Steuarts or Stewards—whose surname, one is told, was derived from an ancestor's unromantic original post of Warden of the Sties,—the glamour cast by misfortune, deserved and undeserved, will probably never be dispelled. Chiefly interesting in our own days as psychological studies, to their contemporaries they were of tragic significance; and if little is traceable in their manners and methods, of the blood of their rugged forbears who fought in the wars of Wallace and Bruce, nearly all these decadent or effeminate descendants possessed a magnetic charm exciting to passionate allegiance the most level-headed, even when mingled with consciousness that its royal recipient was unworthy of such whole-hearted trust.

FACSIMILE SKETCHES OF PANELS BY INIGO JONES.

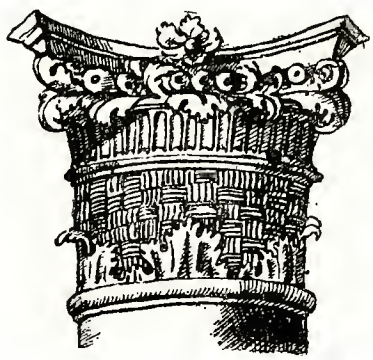
The decorated furniture of the days of

JAMES THE FIRST

of England and Sixth of Scotland, "The wisest fool in Christendom" (who must also be called the "Royal Solomon," to duly discharge the literary conscience of its stock labels), presented little radical difference to that of later Elizabethan days. The same unstinted use of solid materials, the same picturesque if crude concepts of Italian detail, marked the earlier years of both Stuart architecture and Stuart decorative home equipments.

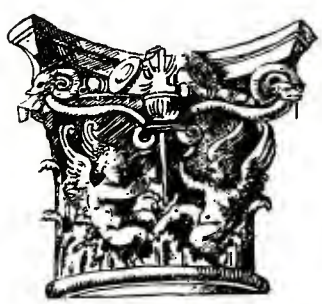


It was not without tremors for the future of Englishmen that even educated men had viewed the luxurious new buildings with many chimneys which were erected from Elizabethan days. Harrison the Chronicler voices this feeling, saying, that when the houses "were builded of willow we had oken men; but now they are come to be made of oke . . . the men had become willow."



Harrison also appears to have considered the smoke, so imperfectly carried off by the central hole or *louvre*, to have been a wholesome specific against many ills of the body.

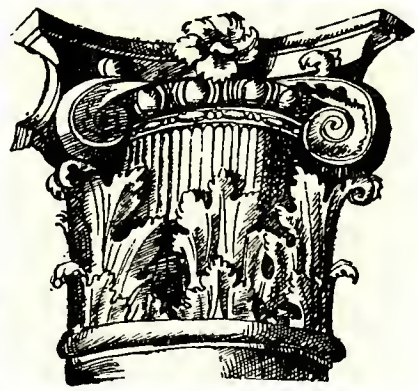
In Jacobean times we first discern the authoritative influence of the architect of the exterior over the design of the interior equipments of the house; indeed, the architect, or "Devizor," and his functions, were both of somewhat shadowy nature, until the days of England's first great architect, Inigo Jones. He, Christopher Wren, and Vanbrugh all interested themselves in, and assumed responsibility for, the woodwork fittings of their buildings.



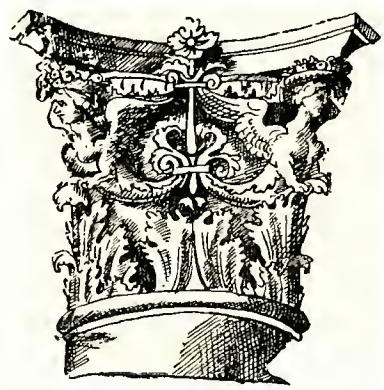
FACSIMILE SKETCHES OF CAPITALS BY INIGO JONES.

INIGO JONES

It is with more than a *soupçon* of regret that the lover of the many-gabled picturesque Tudor work, with its homely irregular skyline and plan, views the advent of the scholarly architects who transplanted the Vitruvian-Palladian system to our less congenial English soil.



In Walpole's words, "England adopted Holbein and Van Dyck, borrowed Rubens, and produced Inigo Jones." Indeed, the definite abandonment of the last shreds of Gothic, and the real practice of Italian Renaissance, commenced only with Inigo Jones—the first of the England traveller-architects,—reached its highest point with Sir Christopher Wren and his school, and underwent an equally slow process of decay, in matters architectural, during the eighteenth century. Inigo Jones, on his return from Italy and the Danish Court in 1605, was first commissioned to design decorations for masques and pageants.



The portion remaining—the Banqueting Hall—increases our regret that he was prevented by the Puritans and the Civil War from carrying out in its entirety his design for the palace of Whitehall. Had the whole structure been built, and Van Dyck been commissioned to paint upon the walls of the Banqueting Hall the story of the Order of the Garter, at a cost of £75,000, it would

FACSIMILE SKETCHES OF CAPITALS BY INIGO JONES.

have been one of the noblest palaces in Europe. The ceiling of the Hall was painted by Rubens in Antwerp, at a cost of £3000.

Inigo Jones' influence upon the decorative woodwork of the Stuart period was greater than can be gauged by the record of his actual achievements in interior design, one of the most interesting of which is the chimneypiece at Wilton House illustrated in Colour Plate XXX. His ideals and interpretations of Renaissance were dominant in the work of his son-in-law and nephew, John Webb, one of his many pupils, and it may well be supposed that even Sir Christopher Wren derived much from the earlier master.

Inigo Jones was Surveyor of Works to

CHARLES THE FIRST

The first and almost the only connoisseur among England's monarchs; a friend of Rubens and Van Dyck, the purchaser of the Raphael Cartoons; the monarch of whom it has been said that he knew all the arts, except that of governing.

It is a strange coincidence that our English Charles I. and Louis XVI. of France, the two monarchs whose disastrous reigns were ended by their execution at the hands of their subjects, were each handicraftsmen, genuinely interested in the industrial arts, Charles saying that "he believed he could make his living by any trade save that of making hangings, and of that he knew a little." A modest boast, since he endeavoured to remedy his ignorance by bringing over some foreign craftsmen who specially excelled in the latest continental developments of the upholsterer's art.

It is useless to emphasise the belief resulting from study of early Stuart furniture, that had England continued contented under Charles I. and his queen (a daughter of the Medici), the national woodwork would have been developed into a dignified yet flexible expression of national needs and idiosyncrasies.

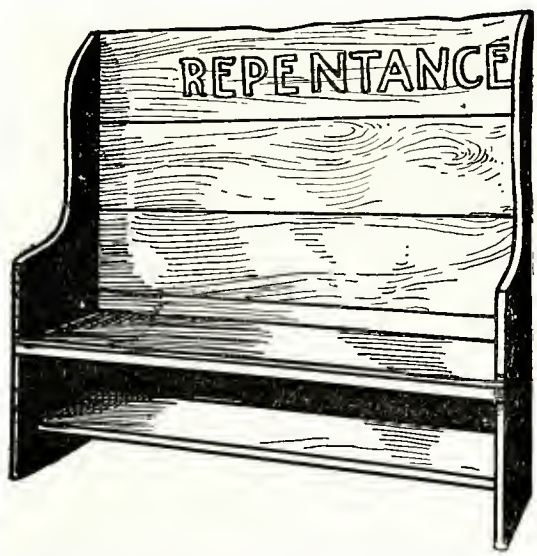
Passing perforce to the second of the three great political divisions which we have accepted as lines of demarcation for the Stuart period, that of the

COMMONWEALTH

The see-saw of opinion alternately unduly exalts and depreciates the Puritan and all his works, but whatever their effect upon the well-being of England politically, from the artistic standpoint the Civil Wars and Commonwealth are essentially the revolt of narrow Philistinism, against the liberal arts and refinements.

Despite Swinburne's aphorism, "Puritanism is in this one thing absolutely right about art: they cannot live and work together, or the one under the other," one feels some belated indignation at the savage foolishness of the Roundheads towards all that savoured of taste or learning when reading, for instance, that—in defiance of their promise to do no damage to the furniture and goods, if Lady Arundel would surrender—the besiegers of Wardour Castle not only burnt all the wearing apparel not in actual use, but demolished a magnificent carved chimneypiece (valued by contemporaries at £2000) with their vandalistic axes.

It is some corroboration of the theory that Cromwell's private tastes—though he is credited with desiring his portrait to be emphatically realistic, "with the warts"—were not acridly utilitarian, to find that the staircase of the house he built at Highgate for his daughter, upon her marriage to General Ireton, was ornamented by figures of the various grades of soldiers in her husband's army.



SABBATH-BREAKING GOLFERS' SEAT OF REPENTANCE. PARISH CHURCH, ST. ANDREWS.

Nevertheless it was with Crom-

well's approval as Lord Protector that the furniture, hangings, pictures, and other art effects of nineteen royal palaces were destroyed or sold to foreigners. One is not surprised to find, therefore, that no Tudor examples are left at Windsor Castle of all the items mentioned in the inventory in 1547. Many a noble old piece of furniture was doubtless destroyed in sheer iconoclastic wantonness, revenge, or for firewood, or found its way into homes incapable of valuing such "luxuries." The confiscations and dispersals of "delinquents'" belongings were enormous.

Fines said to have amounted to more than a million pounds were paid by the Royalist families for the privilege of retaining the remnants of their property: the would-be neutrals at times faring worst, some sharing the fate of the owner of Bramhall Hall, who was fined, raided, and requisitioned by both parties, and ultimately again fined by the Parliament for inability to resist payment to the Loyalists!

Furniture of the Commonwealth evinces at least the dignity of reticence. The craftsmen of the period preferred sound construction to ornament, and infused perforce the conscientious sombre temperament of their rulers into their work.

Cromwell's mild assumption of State ceremony, which so grieved many of his friends, slightly relaxed the poverty of the mode; yet upon his death, his son's retirement, and the Year of Anarchy, England would have no more of the stern austerity which regarded melancholy as essential to morality, and art as almost synonymous with vice.

CHARLES II., "The Merrie Monarch"

The revulsion of feeling which produced that second acceptance of the Stuarts, the Restoration, is traceable in the decorative furniture modes of the days of Charles II. Puritan design, bald and severe, was thrown aside for the brighter continental modes; a *mélange* of French, Flemish, and Italian motifs, bizarre but piquant in its more or less congruous blendings. Not only had Charles II. lived amid foreign

PLATE XXVI

SHOVELBOARD TABLE IN THE HALL OF LITTLECOTE

The Property of Mr. L. Popham, and by permission of Mrs. Leopold Hirsch

Length, 30 ft. 2 in.; width, 3 ft.; height, 3 ft. *Circa* 1660

The decorative woodwork within the ivy-clad walls of Littlecote is in harmony with its forty gables and the traditions—historical and romantic—associated with its many-mullioned exterior: the interior displays a wealth of panelling and old furniture, and is almost guiltless of modern anachronisms.

The long Shovelboard Table here illustrated is undoubtedly the finest of its type in England. Its plain, uncarved bulb-legs, and the pendants of the frame, indicate Cromwellian or—possibly—Charles the Second period. The top is unusually narrow for so late a period, and suggests that the owner felt that Merrie England, not having even in his days become sufficiently peaceful for him to sit at board without having his back close to the wall, he consequently preferred to adhere or revert to his ancestor's custom. It must be remembered that such long tables were narrow compared with those of the present day: partly that diners, who sat upon the wall side of the table only, might more conveniently be waited upon by servitors across the board.

When the game of shovelboard subsequently became popular the table was made quickly convertible to its use, by means of thumb-screws fixing a receptacle at the end, and nets at the sides for the overshot metal discs, which were propelled from the farther end of

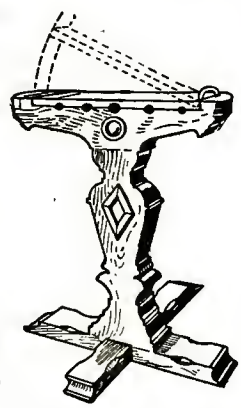
the table to a mark drawn some 3 or 4 in. from the end; the game is still played in Scotland, where, however, it is better known as the curling table.

At the farther end of the hall, below the magnificent pair of Irish elk horns, which measure about 7 ft. 6 in. across, are Chief Justice Popham's chair and thumbstocks—an old-time and readily movable substitute for the dock—the silver mace, which was carried before the Life Guards of Charles the First, and two fine "black-jacks."

The faded yellow leathern jerkins, bandoliers, helmets, and petronels arranged round the walls were worn by the Parliamentary troops under the command of General Edward Popham. They looked down upon William of Orange at his interview here with the Commissioners, but one wonders whether their owner thought it might suggest unwelcome memories of his zeal in the opposite direction to leave them upon the walls when he entertained Charles II. That charming trifler's visit to Littlecote appears to have suggested Shaw's picture in his *Mansions of England of the Olden Time* of this very table being used by shovelboard players in Charles II. costume.

fashions so long that they had become natural to him, but large numbers of Stuart adherents, who had perforce shared his exile, had acquired the same tastes, during their sojourn on the Continent.

The demand for new furniture must have been pressing on the part of these proscribed Royalists, who now returned to their native land; since even those who were so fortunate as to recover their estates and homes, found such of their furniture as yet remained, either irretrievably damaged or but clumsy in their eye compared with that of the Continent.



THUMBSTOCKS, LITTLECOTE HALL, FOR CONFINING PRISONERS DURING EXAMINATION.

INDO-PORTUGUESE FURNITURE

Adding to the many new elements at the decorative woodworker's command, Bombay—not only a port for Indian produce, but a species of clearing house to which the Dutch traders to the Far East resorted—was part of the dowry of Catherine of Braganza, Charles II.'s wife, and after her arrival with her suite, much Indo-Portuguese furniture, of ebony or blackwood, richly carved and with twisted columns, was imported. Evelyn, who was presented by Charles II. with a chair of this make, and somewhat similar in design to that shown in our Colour Plate No. XXXV., tells us that the queen brought over with her such Indian "Cabinets as never has been seen before." Thus the decorative furniture of later Carolean days is not entirely dominated by continental woodwork, though the Restoration gave England not only a queen, court, and manners *à la Française*, but, one might almost say, a French king, for Charles II. emulated Louis XIV., without having that monarch's taste, and was essentially Gallic in his outlook on life.

Midway in Charles II.'s reign appears England's great conjurer with the chisel,

GRINLING GIBBON,

whose work carved in soft woods minutely realistic in detail, but arranged in admirably decorative masses, we shall find also in the days of James II., William and Mary, Anne, and George I., and whom Evelyn claims to have discovered whilst living near Deptford. Deptford

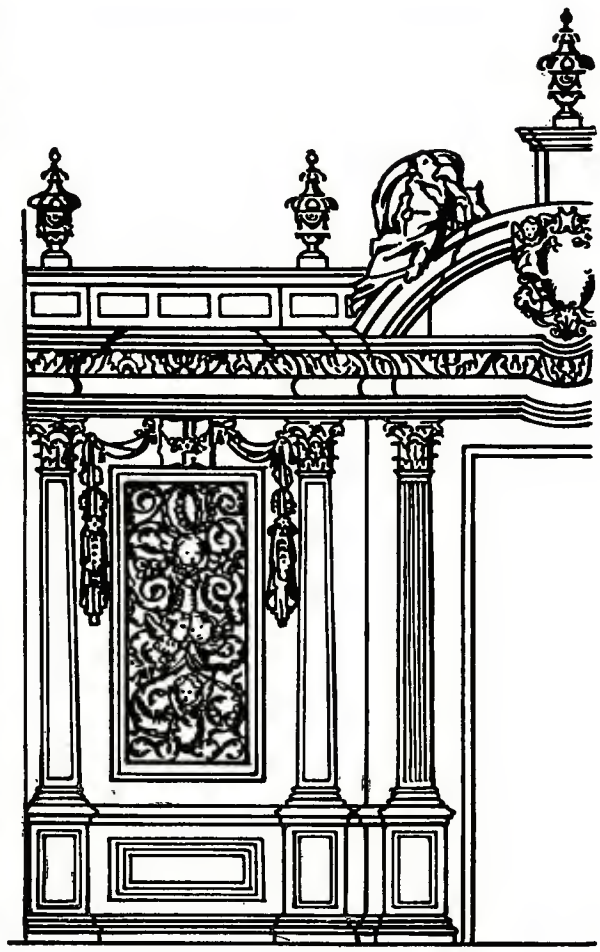
CARVING BY GRINLING GIBBON. ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL.

will be remembered as the scene of Peter the Great's shipbuilding studies; its naval importance dates back to the days of Henry VIII., when Admiralty Offices were established there, and from those times gave occupation to many carvers in decorating the picturesque high-pooped ships of Tudor and Jacobean days.

EVELYN AND GRINLING GIBBON

The insertion of the S in Gibbon's name is so sanctioned by custom that its omission almost savours of pedantry, despite a clear balance of contemporary evidence against its use. Under date January 18, 1671, the indispensable Evelyn's diary speaks of "that incomparable young man, Gibbon, whom I had lately met in an obscure place by accident, as I was walking near a poor solitary thatched house in a field, in our parish, near Sayes Court. Looking in at the window, I perceived him carving that large cartoon or crucifix of Tintoretto, brought from Venice,

such work as for the curiosity of handling, drawing, and studious exactness I never had before seen in all my travels. I questioned him why he worked in such an obscure and lonesome place; he told me that it was that he might apply himself to his profession without interruption. I asked him if he was willing now to be made known to some great man, for I believed that it might turn to his profit; he answered that he was yet but a beginner, but would not be sorry to sell that piece. On demanding the price, he said £100. In good earnest the very frame was worth the money, there being nothing in nature so tender and delicate as the flowers and festoons about it, and yet the work was very strong: in the piece was more than one hundred figures of men, etc. I found he was likewise musical and very civil, sober and discreet in his discourse."



PORTION OF SCREEN. CHAPEL, TRINITY COLLEGE, OXFORD. LATE STUART.

That Evelyn was a good friend to Gibbon, his further reference proves: "I caused Mr. Gibbon to bring to Whitehall his excellent piece of carving, whereof which his Majesty seeing, he was astonished at the curiositie of it, and having considered it a long time and discoursed with Mr. Gibbon, whom I brought to kiss his hand, he commanded that it should be immediately carried to the queene's side to shew her. It was carried into her bed-chamber, where she and the king looked on and admired it again."

This particular outcome of Gibbon's skill was not, however, purchased by the king or his queen. A semi-pedlar Frenchwoman "who us'd to bring petticoates and fanns and baubles out of France to the Ladys," prejudiced the queen against it, though, as Evelyn bluntly puts it, "she understood no more than an asse or a monkey."

Gibbon was, however, shortly after employed at Windsor by Charles II., and subsequently in 1686 at the New Catholic Chapel, Whitehall. During the days of William and of Anne his chisel was active, as we shall note; and upon the ascension in 1714 of George I. he was retained until his death by that monarch as master carver, at a salary of 1s. 6d. per day.

END VIEW OF BOOKCASE. PETERHOUSE COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE. LATE STUART. (*The wings at base possibly added to ensure stability of case.*)

To Evelyn also was Gibbon indebted for an introduction to

SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN,

who owed to Evelyn his own introduction to Charles II.—after Inigo Jones' death in 1652, when Wren became the leader in the development of the purer English Renaissance, giving it a rendering so instinct with his individuality as to almost excuse the architectural punster's writing Wrennaisance!

Wren's opportunity, unique in architectural annals, of displaying his genius to the full, did not occur until the

GREAT FIRE OF LONDON

in 1666 freed later generations from the recurring danger of visitations of the plague of the previous year, with its

awful death roll of 40,000. Some 13,000 buildings are said to have been burnt, together with nearly 100 churches, many of which had been stored with large quantities of furniture during the early stages of the conflagration, in the hope of their escaping the flames. The Great Fire may well be described, therefore, as a great misfortune in the annals of decorative woodwork, since an enormous quantity of furniture of antiquity and interest must have been destroyed.

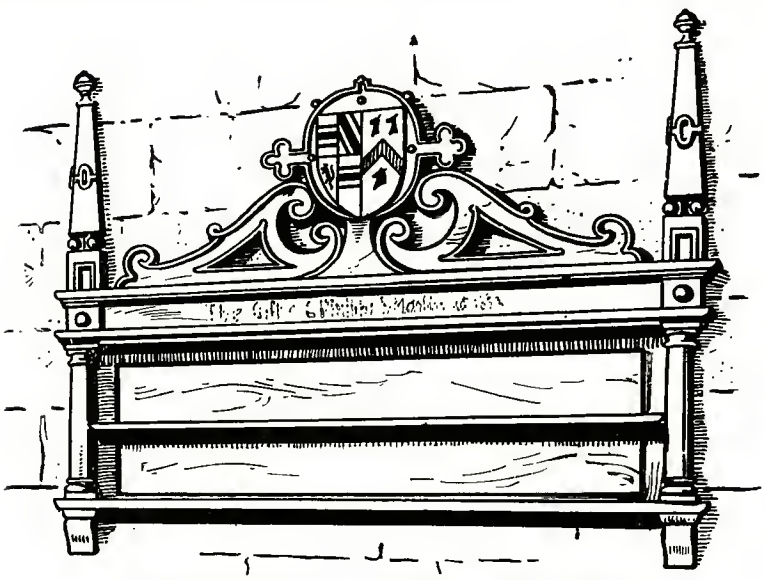
In the woodwork of St. Paul's Cathedral, as well as that of many of the city churches, Wren, as we shall note in our next period, had the assistance of Gibbon and his pupils, Samuel Watson, Drevôt of Brussels, and Lawrence of Mechlin. Wren, by the way, must have possessed much of the versatility which had distinguished Michael Angelo, Leonardo da Vinci, and many others of the great Italian artists, since he is described in the charter of the Royal Society as "Christopher Wren, Doctor of Medicine and Saville Professor of Astronomy in our University of Oxford," at which university he was also Professor of Mathematics.

After the lean years of the Commonwealth the cabinetmaker of Carolean days doubtless felt gratefully the stimulus of Charles' accession, provided he refrained from public expressions on politics and theology. This was, however, too difficult a task for Stephen Colledge, "the Protestant Joyner," who made the fine wainscot panelling (at a cost of £300) for the Hall of the Stationers' Company in 1674, and was one of the victims of the politico-religious rancour of his days, being hanged at Oxford in 1681, "having been convicted of conspiracy upon monstrous small evidence."

SILVER FURNITURE

Though Massinger at the beginning of the century, when he speaks of silver bathing tubs, shows his knowledge of the Spanish and German *penchant* for silver Renaissance furniture which spread

to France in his days, it was, in England, reserved for the court and times of the Second Charles to express its love of luxury, and ape the opulence of the French court by silver-mounted furniture — such as that presented by the citizens of London to the witty Stuart king, and drawn from the Royal Collection at Windsor Castle, by his late Majesty's permission, in Colour Plate No. XXXVI.

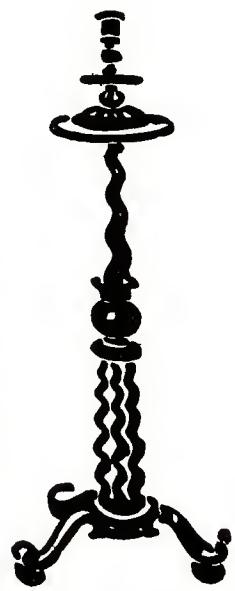


DOLE-BOARD. ALL SAINTS, HEREFORD. DATED 1683.

JAMES II

Lilliburlero—lero—lero—
Lilliburlero, bullen—a-la.

History has as usual revised its previous slap-dash presentment. James II. is now deemed to have been a tactless not unkindly fool, the tool of traitorous self-ambitious missioners, rather than a malevolent tyrant scheming to hand his subjects over to the methods of propaganda of the Spanish Inquisition.



WOODEN SIDE CANDELABRA. CHARLES II.

Though furniture, in common with the other branches of the applied arts, owed nothing to his encouragement, the beginning of his brief and inglorious reign coincided with the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

THE FRENCH IMMIGRATION

The resulting immigration of some 30,000 or 40,000 French craftsmen and their families was an event pregnant with consequences to British arts and crafts; for among these Huguenot workers were many skilled cabinetmakers, inlayers, and carvers, and it was doubtless largely due to their settlement in this country that English furniture displayed henceforward increasing technical expertness. Indeed, upon the formative arts the stimulus was so important that, were it not for a bias in favour of preserving unbroken throughout the Stuart reigns the continuity of their style-label, one might add the three years of James II.'s reign to the succeeding period of William and Anne.

THE BAROCCO INFLUENCE ON ENGLISH CHAIR WORK

During the last years of the Stuart dynasty one can trace the imminent domination in chair work of the *barocco*—contrasted curves of the Italian designers, Bernini and Borromini, now filtering through France and Holland. Incidentally, the use of these curves encouraged the use of walnut, it being found tougher across the grain, as well as more easily worked than the harsher oak.

LATE STUART CHAIR. PENSHURST.

WOODS

Although, until the reign of William and Anne, frames of sofas and chairs were probably more frequently made in oak or soft wood, the real commencement of the vogue of walnut was

in the days of Charles II., the principal pieces being usually "faced" with English walnut.

Perfunctory attempts had been made from Plantagenet times downwards to replace the oaken forests for the use of future generations. The inadequacy of the supply of the wood attracted the attention of that gossiping genius Samuel Pepys, whose unceasing efforts for naval efficiency pass unnoticed, whilst—living under seven rulers—he immortalised himself in his leisure hours by his Diary, written in a species of shorthand which was undecipherable until 1825. "Pollard man" that he was, in Coleridge's phrase, his zeal led him to project large afforestation schemes to ensure that the "wooden walls of England" might be of British oak, and the enormous sales of Crown timber in James I.'s days, at extremely low prices, must have seemed to him little short of criminal.

AGE OF WALNUT

The dearth of the national wood encouraged the use of walnut; the trees planted in Queen Elizabeth's time were becoming timber, and from the end of Charles II.'s reign oak furniture was decreasingly made. Curiously enough, the little disputed dominance of oak practically ceased with that of the Stuarts, whose association with this wood at critical moments of their history is one of the many interesting chapters in the history of the wood.

The use of walnut for furniture of decorative character was undoubtedly much earlier upon the Continent than in this country. Much walnut furniture was imported into England from Holland, where it had been much in vogue during the latter half of the seventeenth century. Its susceptibility to the attacks of wood-boring insects was apparently not realised in England until the end of the Stuart era, but upon the Continent "worm" had long been known, judging from an ordinance of Granada dated 1616 which,

PLATE XXVII

COURT CUPBOARD BUFFET

The Property of Sir Theodore Fry, Beechanger Court

Width, 4 ft. 1 in.; height, 3 ft. 10 in.; depth, 1 ft. 7 in.

The design of this piece, dated the year before Cromwell's death, shows little indication of the Puritanical plainness which marks Commonwealth furniture. It is indeed a disconcertingly late version of the combined buffet and court cupboard, though of undoubted authenticity, despite the fact that the initials must not be taken to indicate that the piece was constructed for its present owner's ancestors.

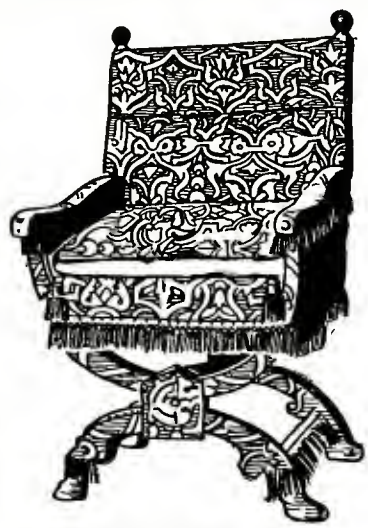
The embroidery shown in the recess behind the buffet is an example of *petit point* worked in silk and gold thread. The introduction of the royal arms of France and England with Scotland in the sinister and Ireland in the dexter, together with the initials "J. R.," which, with the probable needlewoman's name Mary Hulton, occupy opposite lower corners (not visible in our sketch), indicate the date of the work to be the reign of James I. The woollen Indian carpet—also of seventeenth-century design—is from the Salting collection.

IF EF 1658

after stating that "divers of the carpenters and joiners cut their walnut and other woods while yet the moon is crescent, whereby the wood decays," proceeds to order that "all walnut and other woods be cut only at the time of the waning moon, and be not used until seasoned thoroughly, so that it does not warp," a prescription requiring a belief in occultism from a timber merchant!

STUART UPHOLSTERY

The Company of Upholders is stated to have been founded as early as the middle of the fifteenth century, and to have received a grant of arms from Edward VI. We are told upon better authority that Cornhill was the headquarters of the upholder in those days when the Tottenham Court Road was a grassy lane, famed for flowers and innocent of furniture, and that the upholder originally dealt also in old clothes, old armour, beds, and combs.



UPHOLSTERED CHAIR. KNOLE.

The puffed and padded jerkins, doublets, and trunk hose, and the farthingales (which latter developed to such proportions that James I. forbade their being worn at Court masques, and ladies found decorum necessitated the absence of arms from the chairs upon which they sat), greatly fostered the fashion for textile fabrics, and encouraged the elaborate upholstery — the chief novelty in early Jacobean furnishings of the wealthy. The upholder indeed must, in early Jacobean days, have been a busy and wealthy craftsman, for enormous sums were expended upon embroidered hangings, gold, silver, and pearls being introduced with considerable prodigality.

Probably the brilliant colourings of the velvet, silk, or needle-

work fabrics contributed as greatly to the vogue of upholstered furniture as the increased comfort. Cushions were used for the caned furniture, as they had been for its more solid forerunners; whilst at times the old wall hangings were cut up for use as covering fabrics.

OAK "RESTORATION" CHAIR IN HAMILTON ROOM, HOLYROOD PALACE, EDINBURGH.

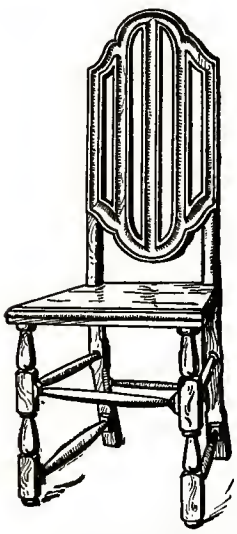
The built-up head-dresses and periwigs of the period encouraged the employment of high-backed chairs and settees. One finds the "stuffover" upholstered seats were even higher than the cane chairs which they succeeded or supplemented.

One of the earliest examples of English upholstery, the identical chair at Knole used by James I., is shown in Colour Plate XV. It is depicted in the king's portrait by Mytens—the painter also of that entertaining little fire-eater, Jeffrey Hudson, the 18-inch dwarf who was first presented to the queen in a cold pie. At thirty, Hudson quickly added twenty-seven inches to his stature, and in a duel killed his opponent, who had come armed with a squirt in derision. These chairs, which might with equal certitude be placed at the commencement of the Stuart period as at the conclusion of the Elizabethan, possess a pathetic dignity in their tarnished and faded velvet coverings, with their knotted and fringed threads of gold and silver.

ALLWOOD CHAIRS

Proof of the ceremonial attribute of the chair is given by the fact that no sets of chairs appear to have been made in England until the end of Elizabeth's reign: a point well worth remembrance when to any set of chairs or "part of a set" is ascribed a pre-Jacobean date.

The Commonwealth was upon the whole a good friend to the chair-maker, since the "Cromwell" chairs brought over from Holland in such quantities swept aside the last vestige of etiquette of the seat; henceforth Jack and his master could both be seated upon chairs of identical pattern, without any world-cataclysm occurring.



CHAIR IN JOHN KNOX'S STUDY, EDINBURGH. STUART. (*John Knox died in* 1572.)

JACOBEAN CARVED OAK CHAIR. (VERY REV. SUB-DEAN BOURNE, D.D.) (*The holes in arms suggest its use as a child's chair for infant heir after the father's death.*)

CHARLES I. CHAIR, WITH SEAT SUNK FOR "SQUAB" CUSHION. PARNHAM COLLECTION.

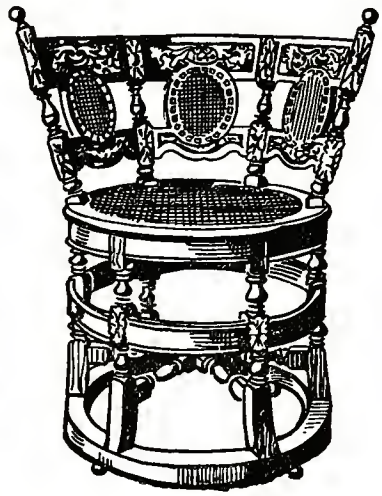
These broad square and squat chairs of the Commonwealth are strongly typical of the Roundhead.

From about 1650 front rail stretchers were raised more from the floor, or set back under the seat: the floor was kept cleaner, possibly owing to the Puritans' dislike of dirt; the feet could now without discomfort be placed under the chair. A type of chair having deeper and enriched front rails was thus encouraged, of which several examples had existed upon the Continent as early as the days of Henri Deux.

The Cromwell chair had a low padded back, and seats covered with leather or brocade, studded with the large gilt or brass-headed nails in vogue, an open space invariably being left between the

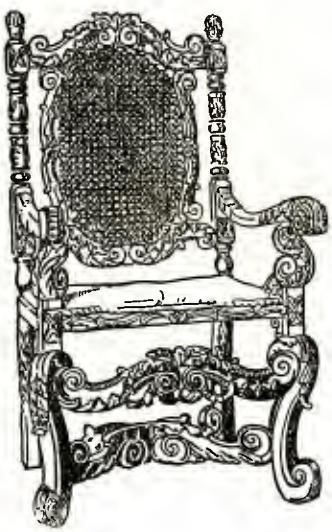
back and the seats. In the slightly higher chairs this space was lessened, the plain panels nearly reaching to the seat, which was sunk panelled that the cushion might "bed" therein.

CROMWELLIAN CHAIR.



JACOBEAN "WHEEL" CHAIR IN CARVED OAK. *CIRCA* 1640.

Of that economical outcome of Cromwellian design, the chair convertible into a table by lowering the hinged back to rest upon the arms, the chair referred to in our chapter on "Some Seats of the Mighty," as formerly belonging to Theodore Hook, is an interesting example.



CHARLES II. OAK CHAIR. (SIR GEORGE DONALDSON.)

Though throughout Stuart days chairs were made with solid wood panelled backs of the late Elizabethan pattern, from the Restoration chair-backs became more open, and pierced wooden scroll-work was very generally used as a frame for cane and for perforated "slats."

STUART CANED-SEAT CHAIR.

With the accession of Charles II. came the deepening, and carving with pierced work, of the two horizontal back rails, and the upright inner rails.

Many and varied as are the patterns of later Carolean chairs, they are almost invariably high backed, with spiral or spindle-turned posts and with carved scroll-work; sometimes supporting central cane-panelled backs and surmounted by a crown, whence their title of "Restoration" chair to emphasise their owners' loyalty.

The under rails connecting the front legs were also carved and scrolled.

DAY-BEDS

As we have noted, the parlour was usually a species of bedroom also. In consequence, when its functions as a reception and sitting-room were deemed sufficiently important to justify its entire disuse as a bedroom, the bed which had served as a resting lounge during the day was missed; hence arose the day-bed mentioned by Malvolio, in musing of his happy future, "with branded velvet gown, having come from a day-bed."

But though day-beds appeared at the conclusion of the Tudor period, they had apparently little vogue and suffered eclipse from the troubled days of the Civil War; being, one would imagine, equally in danger from usage or dislike by the soldiery.

STUART DAY-BED.

Their prompt reintroduction and popularity at the Restoration was probably owing to their gay revolt against the sadness of Puritan colouring. The design of the day-bed was adapted from the new forms of chairs, the backs being adjusted, with primitive simplicity, to the desired angle by cords or chains.

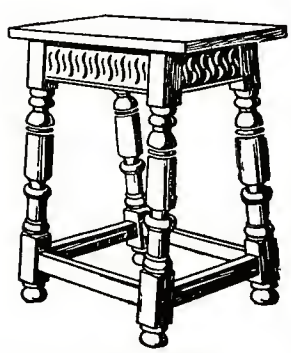
SETTLES AND COUCHES

Of all the settles and benches which mediæval MSS. and other documentary evidence prove to have existed from the earliest times, either as *dossiers* or similarly shaped to the *bancs* of Francis I.'s days, scarcely any of English decorative and domestic character are to be found earlier than Stuart times,—a period when, as we have noted, the carved high-back "all wood" settle somewhat yielded its place to more luxurious upholstered settees such as the Indo-Portuguese settee at Penshurst, or the example shown in the Colour Plate of Knole furniture. The latter design, which succeeding generations have found it difficult to improve upon, considerably resembles a French pattern in use during the days of Henri Quatre and Louis Treize.

LOVE SEATS

Love seats, to adopt the jocular term of their day for the double chairs, were, in their genesis, merely enlarged chairs. Later Stuart days witnessed their development into luxuriously upholstered short settees with high backs of twin pattern.

STOOLS AND TABOURETS



JOINT STOOL (COFFIN STOOL), SOUTH WILTS. MUSEUM.

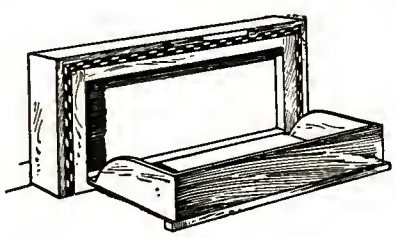
Stools or tabourets were made in imitation of the lower parts of the upholstered chair. Most common are the Joint Stools, those short seats reserved for the joint carver, which were still made to match the forms placed on either side of the table. Joint Stools have retained the alternative title of Coffin Stools, in deference to their occasional use as trestles not only to support coffins indoors, but because they were carried by additional bearers

to rest the coffin upon at intervals in walking funerals, and to enable a change of bearers also to be made.

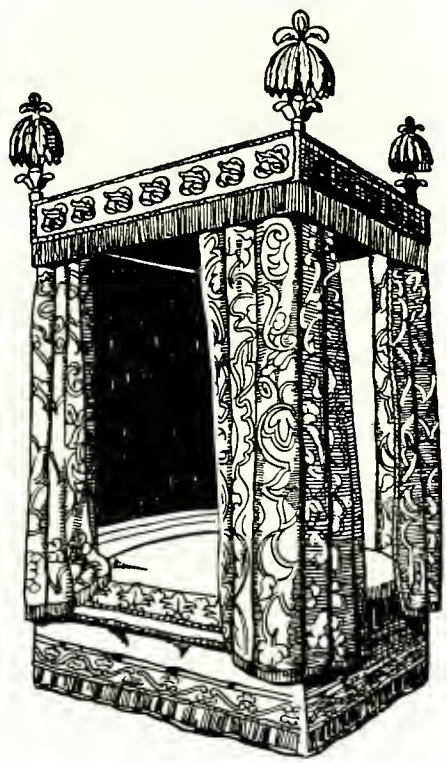
During the latter part of the Stuart period they fell into disfavour, and degenerated in design and make.

BEDS

Would-be sleepers who find the dark oak carved bedstead, with canopy supported at the foot end by posts independent of the actual bed, "stuffy" and depressive, would probably be affected even more by the high upholstered beds *à la Louis Treize* which were used in Stuart days for important and State bedrooms at a cost prohibitive to all but the richer nobles, who usually purchased them in preparation for royal visits. The insanitary hangings and finial plumes of these beds are more suggestive to modern tastes of the hearse than of the hearth.



FOLDING FLOOR BED. THE "PALACE," CULROSS.

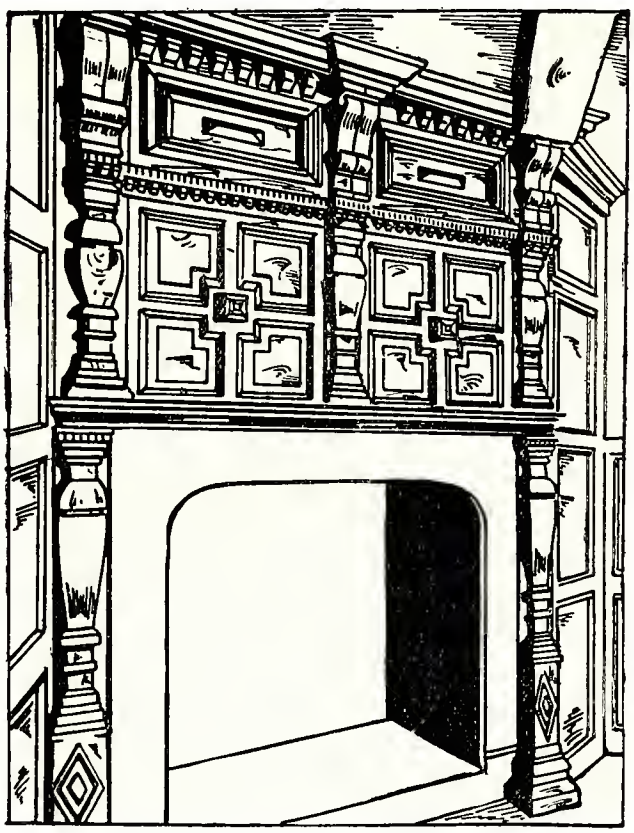


STATE BED. KNOLE.

Some few of the curious old Scottish folding "floor beds," closing up flush with the wall and therefore practically undiscoverable during the day, survive. That in the so-called "Palace" at Culross, with four panels in front with raised, reeded, and with bolection mouldings, is a good example of its type.

FIREPLACES

In the times of Charles I. coal had come into common use in London and along the coast, despite the woodmongers' petitions to Parliament against its "smoake of the bottomless pit." A modified size of opening was found desirable for its better combustion, and substantially changed the conditions of fireplace design. For many years, however, in the less accessible or better wooded parts of the provinces, wood remained the only fuel. We find, for instance, even in large mansions such as Wilton House, that in the double cube room fireplace, inspired by Inigo Jones, the larger proportions of the Tudor opening are retained.



EARLY STUART CHIMNEY-PIECE IN OLD HOUSE, HIGH STREET, SALISBURY.

Later Stuart fireplaces shared in the decorative revolt from Puritanism, and, with Grinling Gibbon to bedeck them with wooden flowers wanting but colour and scent to equal nature's own handiwork, became remote indeed from the primitive hearth in the centre of the smoky hall, around which the lord and his vassals gathered to shiver and scorch alternately.

PLATE XXVIII

CARVED OAKEN STAIRWAY, GODINTON

By permission of
GEORGE ASHLEY DODD, ESQ., D.L., J.P.

THE founders of this little-known treasure house of carved and panelled oak appear to have encouraged alternatives in the spelling of their name. We find nearly a dozen variations of the primary Touque, Toke, or Tuke,—a record doubling those indulged in by Shakespeare or Raleigh. Quite the most noteworthy of the Godinton family to the average man, is that Captain Nicholas Toke who, having at the age of ninety-three laid his fifth wife to rest beside her predecessors in the chancel of the village church, started to walk to London in search of a sixth, but was cruelly overtaken by illness ere reaching town, and returned, to be buried amid his consorts, without equalling the record achieved by Henry VIII. with the aid of the Church and the executioner's block. Somewhat curiously, it was the function of another of the Tokes—Sir Brian—to pay the salary as court painter of Hans Holbein, whose too flattering portrayal of Anne of Cleves deceived Henry VIII. into his fifth choice: a mischance which may have inclined Henry to recall his eulogy, in reply to a nobleman's complaint of the painter's rudeness: "I tell you, of seven peasants I could make as many lords, but of seven lords I could not make one Holbein."

The Godinton staircase, with its ample cupboard supporting one of the Armada ships' chests, is so instructive a piece of woodwork that one does not scruple to regard it as within our purview: the treads follow the old joiner's maxim of the greater their width the less their height, and are consequently wider and lower than those of the average staircase of the present day. It was a favoured decorative

device to cap the newel posts with the animal heraldically adopted by the family, but these posts carved with grotesques indicate resort to the German pattern books, then exercising a somewhat debasing influence over English renderings of human and animal forms of the details of the early Italian Renaissance. A noticeable peculiarity of the stairway is that the balusters are formed by horizontal divisions into triangular sets. Each baluster is thus of different length, instead of being identical with its neighbours.

The "Romayne" work medallions under the upper stairs are of a slightly earlier period, whilst the panelling of the cupboards with its turned applied semi-spindle work is of distinctly later date—probably James the First—corroborative evidence, if needed, being afforded by the top of the cupboard being above the line of the stair. Altogether the Godinton stairway is well worthy of study.

Personally, one feels that time has so knit together and blended into harmony its constituents from the late fourteenth-century "trellis," to the cupboard panelling that, though the style-purist may austerely condemn, the artist finds real delight in its mellowed details.

The placid history of Godinton is to be read upon its walls and ceilings, from late Gothic to early Georgian times. The transitions from style to style have, upon the whole, been deftly blended. Evidence of the thickness of its walls and the depths of its recesses was given when, upon the removal of two fireplaces' fittings, it was found that behind each existed, not one as had been anticipated, but two former mantels, each with ample hearths!

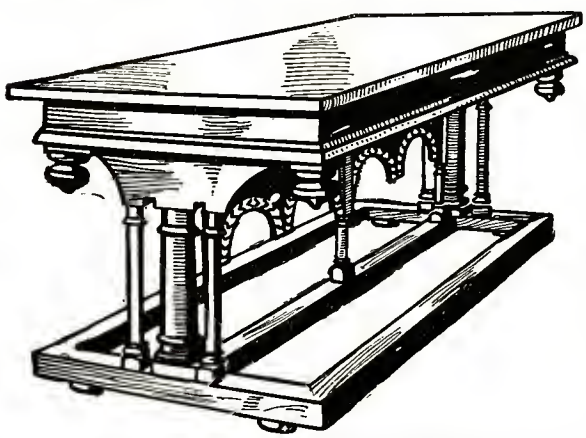
The Godinton stairway, embodying decorative woodwork of the fifteenth, the sixteenth, and the seventeenth centuries, is one of the few plates in this work (each of which will be clearly indicated) representing an existing interior containing work of more than one period. Being the natural outcome of the needs of successive generations, the less sense of anachronism results: a plea which may be extended to justify the yet more modern stair carpet.

STUART TABLES

Evidence that the trestle was still in use in Stuart days will be found in the description of Plate XIV.

Until Cromwellian days the dining-table rarely exceeded 2 ft. 4 inches in width. After the Restoration a greater sense of security prevailed, and the narrow table, at which the guests were served at the opposite side, sitting with their backs to the wall and protected by the table in front in the event of an enemy's sudden entry, was finally abandoned for a broader board in the centre of the room, at both sides of which guests could sit and be waited upon from behind. The table herewith sketched shows a distinctly unusual variation from the H-shaped stretcher or base of framed tables of the type having turned balusters or flat-shaped uprights on the central cross bar.

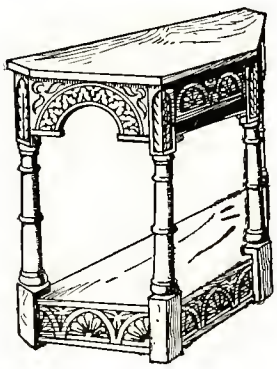
WASSAIL TABLE. JACOBEAN.



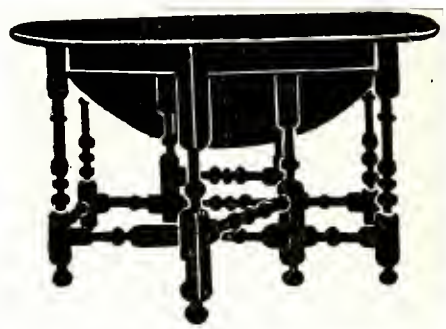
FRAMED TABLE. (WALTER WITHALL, ESQ.)

That more artistic forerunner of the modern extending table, the "drawinge" or draw table, introduced from the Continent in Elizabethan days, was still three or four inches higher than the dining table of to-day. Its melon-ball bulbous member continued popular during the earlier part of the period, and was even placed for awhile upon the severe straight or pillar leg which succeeded it.

The principle of the chair-table was used in the settle-tables known nowadays as monks' benches, although not made until more than half a century after the monasteries had ceased to exist in England. These together with the "Cromwell Chair" form the chief contributions of Puritan design to furniture development.

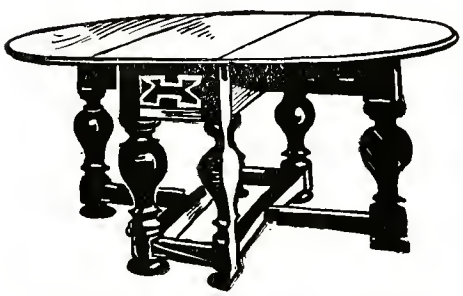


JACOBEAN TABLE. LITTLECOTE HALL. *CIRCA* 1635.



FLAP TABLE. LATE STUART.

The single flap table of early Stuart days developed into the picturesque



SPLIT-BULB GATE-LEG TABLE. STUART.

"GATE-LEG" TABLE

with its usually oval top in three pieces, whereof the two outer are flaps hinged on either side of the central fixed top, and supported when in use by swinging framing hinged to the fixed central framing.

"THOUSAND-LEGGED" TABLES

Whilst falling numerically short of the so-called "thousand legged" table which James I. presented to the Earl of Middlesex, a particularly ingenious extension of the folding type of convertible table are the folding tables, around which the governors sit at their meetings in the

Heriot Hospital, Edinburgh, with hinged flaps upon each of the longer sides enabling them to be used for dining upon either or both sides. When one flap only is raised the width is not too great for guests to

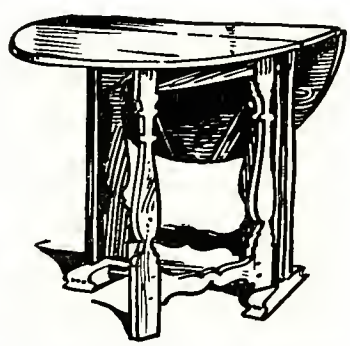
GATE-LEG, OR FOLDING TABLE.

be served from the opposite side if desired. The semicircular table shown at each end for extending the main table may be used independently as a side table. A similar table is at Penshurst.

TEA AND COFFEE TABLES

The curiously synchronising additions of tea, coffee, and cocoa to the beverages of England in this period led to a demand for smaller and lighter tables than heretofore. Evelyn claims to have seen the first cup of coffee drunk in England by a Greek at Oxford in 1637; whilst Cromwell was among the first to take the new "China drink" "called by the Chinians Tchae, and by other nations Tay or Tee," and procurable at from six to ten guineas per pound, a price which rendered it an expensive mistake to follow the example of the lady friend of the Duke of Monmouth, who boiled the

FLAP TABLE. PARNHAM COLLECTION.



GATE-LEG TABLE. ROYAL SCOTTISH MUSEUM, EDINBURGH. *CIRCA* 1650.

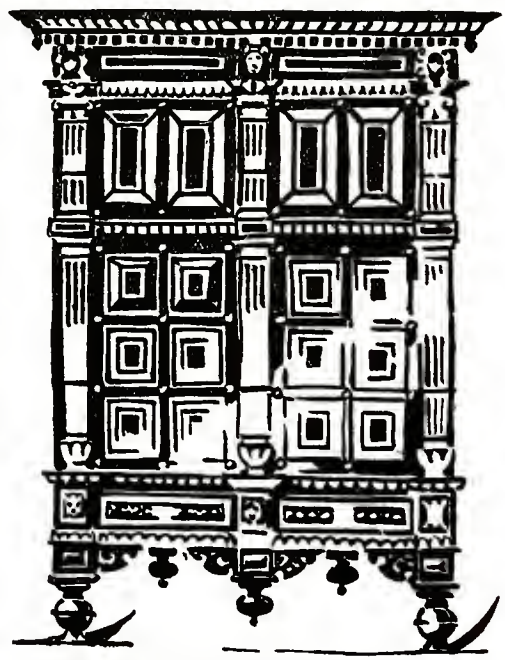
GATE-LEG TABLE.

leaves and, after throwing away the infusion, served them as a vegetable!

At the Restoration also gambling with cards (those "Devil's Books" of the Puritans) such as Pharaoh (Faro) Ombre, Basset and, at a slightly later date, whist ("whisk" or swobbers) speedily became the vogue again, and doubtless increased the demand for smaller, lighter tables. Until the introduction of folding card tables, with their special provision of "wells" for money, those of gate-leg form were used.

CUPBOARDS

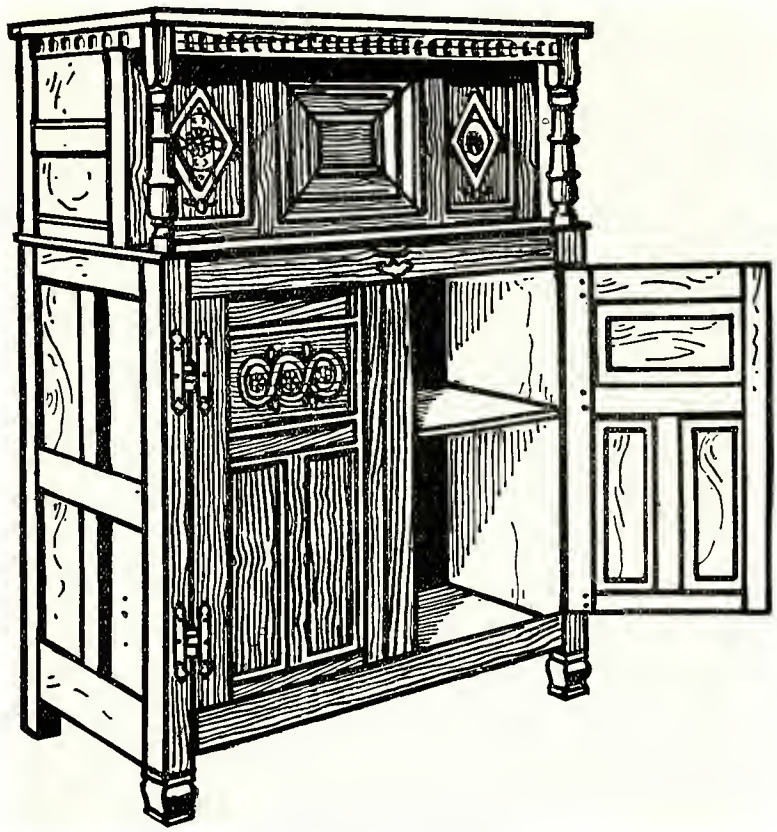
The traceried fronts of openwork dole cupboards or almeries, which were used as receptacles for the gifts—doles—of food to the necessitous, were usually perforated when of pre-Stuart date, but the seventeenth-century woodworkers usually preferred to construct the front of columns enclosed in a frame. Undoubtedly cupboards richly garnished existed in great numbers in Elizabethan and early Stuart days, but in the troubles preceding the Commonwealth, drinking vessels, plates, and other metal heir-looms were melted into coin in great numbers; whilst each side zealously looted the other until there were so few of the old cups to show on the cupboards that the latter were disused or discarded: we have consequently far less examples than one would anticipate.



ARCHBISHOP SHARP CABINET, FORMERLY IN LINLITHGOW PALACE.

From the Commonwealth times the wooden knob handles gradually supplanted the small iron drop handles.

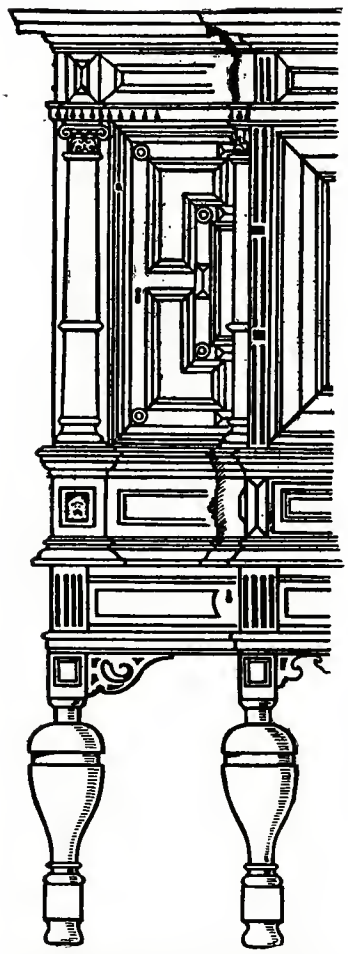
During Charles II.'s reign the combined Court cupboard-chest of drawers became more popular, and was often richly inlaid. It will be remembered that the Court cupboard was so called from its being a short cupboard in contradistinction to the high continental type of *dressoir*.



LATE CAROLEAN CUPBOARD.

The Welsh and border counties, which have usually been belated in their acceptance of new modes, from the middle of the seventeenth century manufactured a variety of cupboard which in proud possession of the euphonious title of *cwpwedd tridarn* reared itself above the common English form of Court cupboard by the addition of an upper canopied shelf. The type seems to have sufficed until the Welsh especially attached themselves to the form now known as the Welsh dresser, of which an illustration is shown in Colour Plate No. XXIX.

When the Elizabethan simple geometrical forms were abandoned in inlay, they were adopted and elaborated in geometrically patterned many mitred mouldings upon the panels of drawers and doors upon such pieces as Sir George Donaldson's dresser; indeed, this enrich-



INLAID CABINET FROM LINLITHGOW PALACE. NOW IN ROYAL SCOTTISH MUSEUM, EDINBURGH.

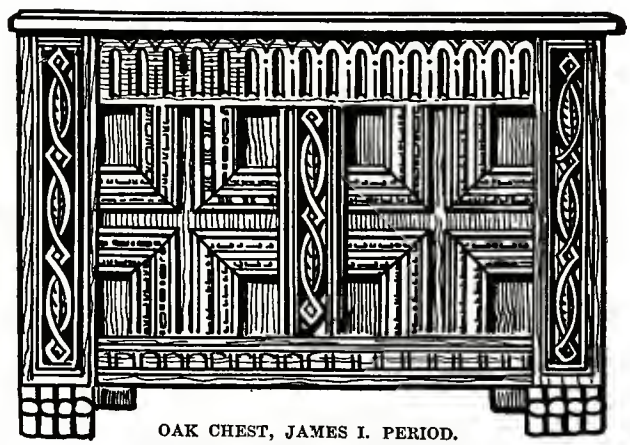
ment is a characteristic feature of the later Carolean and other late seventeenth-century furniture.

DRESSERS

appear towards the end of Charles I.'s reign. Though derived from, they distinctly differ from, the *dressoir* form of the Continent and the preceding period — having usually deep drawers below, panelled with geometrical patterns, and on turned legs, with shelves above for trenchers and hooks for cups, in fashion similar to the present-day fixed kitchen dressers: small side cupboards being added a few years later. The Chinese cupboard or cabinet with its glass doors, made its appearance in Charles II.'s days, an evidence of the trend toward lighter modes of Carolean furniture

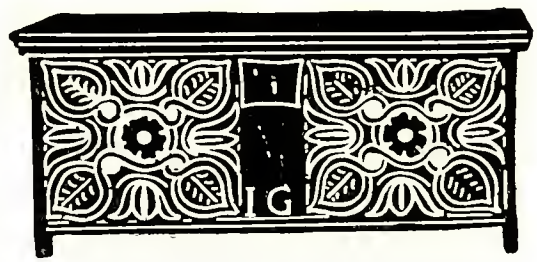
STUART CHESTS

did not for some time present marked differences from those of Tudor times; the chest, indeed, as a decorative box-receptacle for storage, was falling from its position of pre-eminence into comparative dis-



OAK CHEST, JAMES I. PERIOD. (SIR SPENCER PONSONBY-FANE.)

favour, or perhaps one should rather say, its evolution into the modern chest of drawers was proceeding apace. A flat and frequently impoverished air characterises Stuart chests: construction was not only lighter, but a striving after cheapness at the expense of durability now begins to be noticeable: the ends of chests whose fronts were most elaborately decorated were frequently left unpanelled.



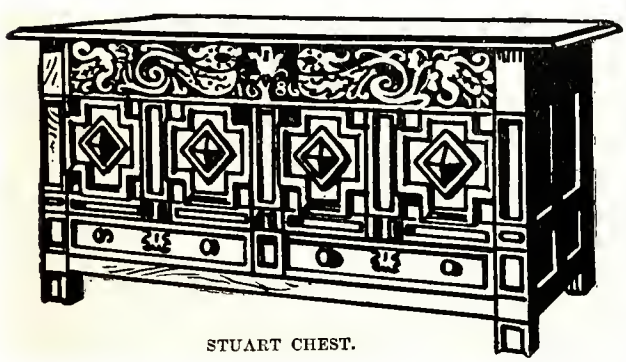
INCISED ELM CHEST. EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. (SIR SPENCER PONSONBY-FANE.)

The cypress or camphor chests are referred to in the *Taming of the Shrew*—

> In cypress chests my arras counterpoints,
> Costly apparel, tents, and canopies,
> Fine linen, Turkey cushions bossed with pearls,
> Valence of Venice gold in needlework,
> Pewter of brass, and all things that belong
> To house or housekeeping.

Such chests were at times decorated with "poker work," *i.e.* patterns burnt into the wood by hot irons.

Our pre-Stuart forefathers, who must have possessed a patience not always given to their descendants, to have endured so long the difficulty and discomfort involved in obtaining access to their goods when stored at the bottom of their chests, would have welcomed the chest with drawers which was slowly evolved in the seventeenth century. The single row of drawers at the top or bottom of the chest was gradually increased until the article was entirely fitted with drawers upon a stand, or entirely enclosed as in the "Tallboy" ("Highboy") double



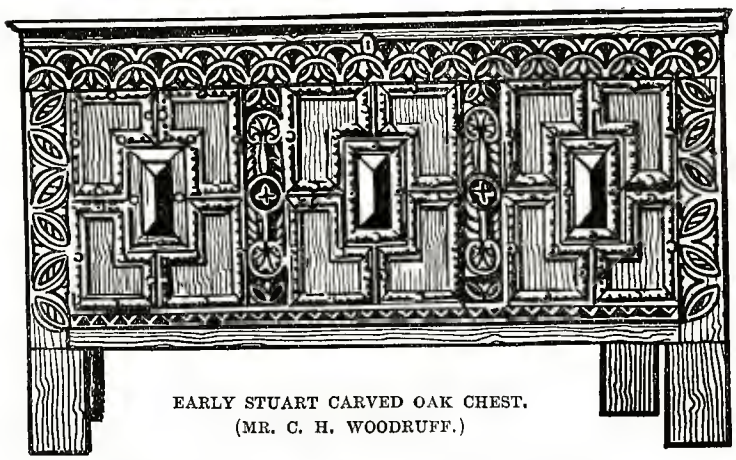
STUART CHEST.

chests of the succeeding days of William the Dutchman and his successors.

STUART DECORATIVE DETAILS

In consequence of near proximity, the artists and craftsmen of England have usually seen continental styles through the spectacles of our Gallic neighbours.

Art lovers at least have little quarrel with the royal Stuarts; the admiration for the arts beautiful, of Charles I. and Charles II., rendered their attitude towards the artists the reverse of that of the vandalistic Puritans, who paid men by the day to break the stained-glass church windows and scatter the royal treasures, selling Rubens' "Woman taken in Adultery" for £20, and a portrait of Henrietta Maria, by Van Dyck, for five shillings! —prices which make the habitués of Christie's feel that they were born too late!



EARLY STUART CARVED OAK CHEST.
(MR. C. H. WOODRUFF.)

A distinction worth remembering when dating old furniture, is that in Stuart furniture the panels gradually were made relatively larger and the mouldings relatively smaller than in Elizabethan.

The characteristic strap-work of Elizbethan times fell slowly into disuse when Charles II. popularised the Dutch forms of Renaissance, with their "jewelling" of pilasters and panels by long black oval bosses. The tulip flower, reminiscent of the tulipomania, which beset the usually phlegmatic Hollanders so severely during the

PLATE XXIX

OAK WELSH DRESSER

The Property of Henry Dann, Esq.

Length, 6 ft. 3 in.; depth of cupboard part, 1 ft. 9 in.; height, 7 ft. 6 in. *Circa* 1688

This sketch is intended to represent the probable furniture and appearance towards the close of the seventeenth century of a well-to-do Welsh or North Devon farmer's slate-floored kitchen and living room.

Present-day Borrows in their tramps through wild Wales, may encounter to this day the spacious "inglenook" and open hearth, with its pots and kettle simmering over the fragrant wood fire—untouched by the mean economics of the last three centuries. They may even perchance have the good fortune to find dressers as interesting as that shown: a really unique piece in respect to its shelves, which are "bowed, but not with toil," though they have no light task in supporting part of their owner's collection of pewter, most of which is of the same date as the dresser; these shelves appear, judging from the back, to have been curved in putting the piece together; the top frieze rail, it will be noted, conforms to the bow of the shelving. The ogee arched headings to the doors (reminiscent also of Georgian Gothic) corroborate the pedigree of the piece, which extends back to late Carolean or early William and Mary days, when we find such shapings frequently used to link the legs of small tables and of stands.

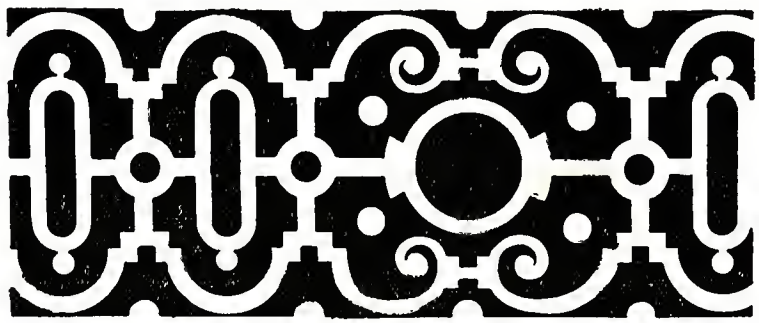
From the end of Elizabeth's reign until nearly Cromwellian days the *dressoir* seems to have fallen into disuse; the dresser which then gradually was evolved (probably in Wales from the *tridarn*) consisted in its lower part of deep drawers upon turned legs, with a high shallow back. Cupboards were added towards the end of William and Mary's reign.

The blackjack upon the shelf bears an inscription upon its silver rim, implying that it was at one time the property of "the wisest fool in Christendom"; and though not so large as one at times finds, its resemblance to the jackboot of olden times is sufficient to somewhat justify the French ambassador, who is said to have reported "that the English were so attached to their beer that they drank it out of their boots!"

The single flap table of early Jacobean days was now enlarged into the picturesque circular or oval top gate-leg table.

The long domination of oak was drawing to a close; though in Wales, Yorkshire, and other country districts it remained perforce the chief wood, its supremacy was now to be disputed by walnut—which in its turn was to yield precedence to mahogany.

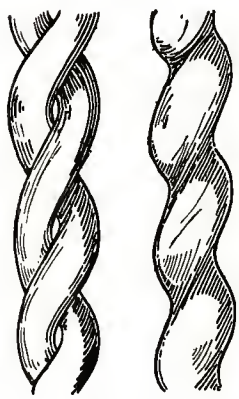
century, was also imported into British woodwork decoration and largely employed.



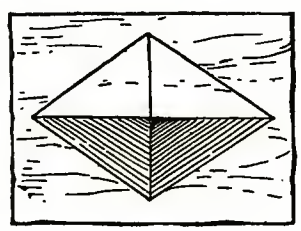
JACOBEAN STRAP-WORK DETAIL. FROM HOUSE AT STUDLAND.

The diamond or lozenge was seldom used until the Cromwellian period, whilst notching, possibly inspired by the wavy ebony mouldings invented in Germany, appears in English furniture towards the end of the Stuart *régime*.

Semicircular scolloped work which,—though at times seen on Gothic work on the under edges of shelving,—was but little used until the end of Elizabeth's reign, gradually became so popular on account of its simplicity as to be abused. Nowadays it is usually a sign-manual of cheap imitations of old work.

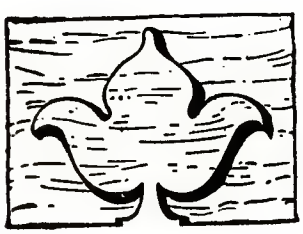


SPIRALS.

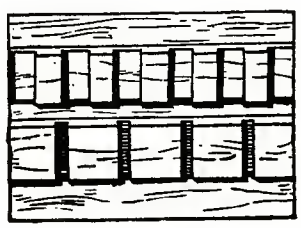


LOZENGE.

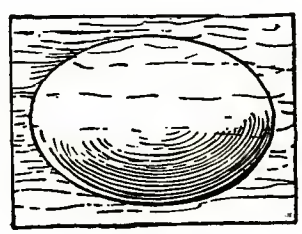
Spiral or twisted turnery appeared in English work from about 1635, having travelled from the East via Portugal or Holland; but though gradually its vogue increased, despite the Civil War, its use is more typical of the post-Reformation than of the pre-Reformation period.



TULIP.

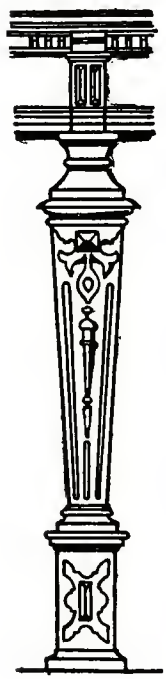


NOTCHING.



OVAL BOSS.

To conclude this recital of small but important typical Stuart details, mention must not be omitted of the Spanish or "scroll" foot which formed the base of so many chairs from Charles II.'s days.



Attention has been directed to the somewhat pernicious influence which the grotesques in the early German pattern books exercised upon woodwork design. Woodworkers, indeed, during Jacobean days were much too prone to copy literally and unintelligently details from foreign sources. Pope's prophecy to the Earl of Burlington, of the results of publishing Palladio's drawings in the eighteenth century, might have been addressed to Sebastian Serlio in 1611, upon the publication of his valuable and interesting *First Book of Architecture in English*—

> Who random drawings from your sheet shall take,
> And of one beauty many blunders make.

TYPICAL STUART PILASTERS.

The sturdy, honest work of the seventeenth-century joiners has nothing to fear in competition with our own days; the mortises are usually pegged and the whole finish manifests a workman's pride in his craft. One notices also a growing technical expertness in the carving, and the beginnings of an inventiveness of new constructional forms for the sake of their utility, in combination with a degeneration in the treatment of traditional details, which had lost their interest and vitality and become mere formulæ or prescriptions to the craftsmen.

Probably the most distinctive feature in the mouldings of the Stuart period was the use of the "ovolo" frieze, which commenced towards the end of Charles II.'s reign, and was continued into the next period.

PLATE XXX

CHIMNEYPIECE IN THE DOUBLE CUBE ROOM, WILTON HOUSE

By permission of the
EARL OF PEMBROKE AND MONTGOMERY

THE grounds and house of Wilton are of haunting charm, and the exquisite Palladian bridge spanning and mirrored by the Nadder lingers in the memory, even when treating of the magnificent interior equipment of the double cube room in the beautiful ancient home of the Pembrokes.

Wilton House is largely a memorial of the genius of Inigo Jones, whose connection with the Pembrokes was of intimate character. His association with the locality commenced in the days of James I., when he was somewhat absurdly commissioned to guess the origin of a neighbouring and much more venerable piece of stonework than Wilton House—Stonehenge. Whether the then Earl of Pembroke, but twenty years of age at the time, sent or assisted Inigo Jones to study in Italy; what occasioned the quarrel which arose between the earl and the architect whom he subsequently called "Iniquity Jones," are interesting but irrelevant side issues. Certain it is that to Inigo Jones belongs the merit of introducing into the homes of the English aristocracy the style of the Villa Medici and the Barbarini Palace of Italy, and that Wilton House owes no small part of its gracious dignity to Jones.

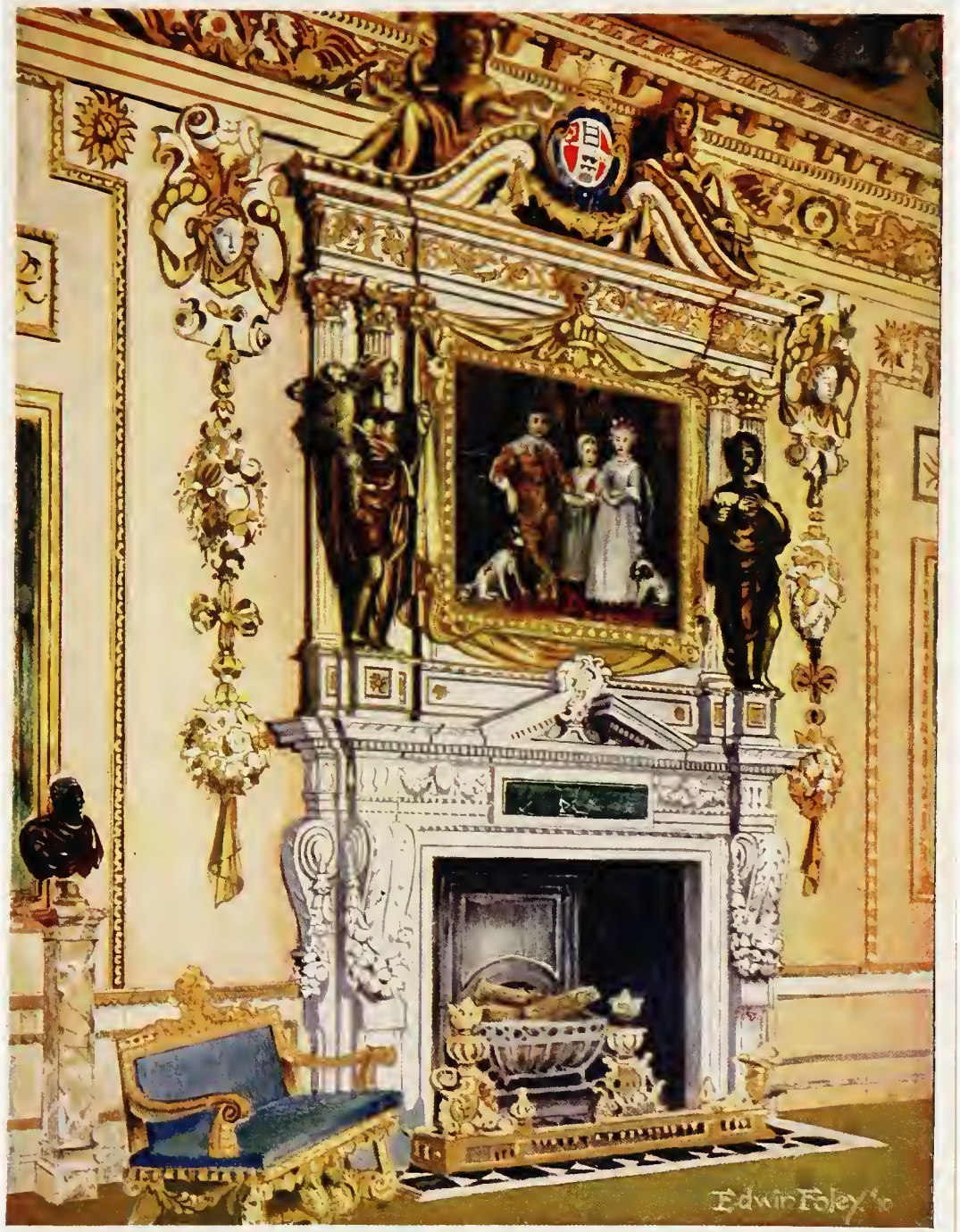
The double cube room—in which the famous Vandycks are now hung—in common with much of the interior as well as the south

front, was designed by Inigo Jones after the fire between 1630 and 1640, when he was commissioned by Philip, the fourth earl, to draw up plans for rebuilding. The work appears to have been carried out by his pupil and son-in-law, John Webb, shortly after the middle of the century, when Evelyn visited Wilton; the somewhat overloaded decoration of the coving, and the ceiling pictures, being later additions.

One needs but to glance at the carved details on either side of the chimneypiece in the double cube room to recognise the extent to which Inigo Jones influenced Grinling Gibbon: the heads and the large pendant masses of fruit and foliage tied by ribbons on either side of chimneypiece are almost identical in conception with the masterly creations of Gibbon's chisel. The detail of the ornament around the heads, however, remind one somewhat of those ear-shaped curves invented by Rabel, and so grotesquely exaggerated by the later German designers.

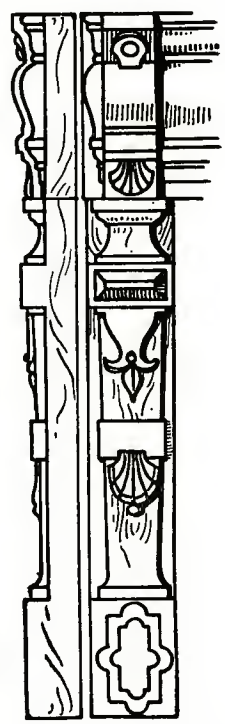
The marble fireplace is of the same period, and may, or may not, be of Jones' design. It is Italian in inspiration and probably in workmanship; the steel grate and fittings are of a design in accord with the period, and are so identified with the room that it has been deemed wise to retain them, though undoubtedly of later manufacture.

The picture in the panel is a somewhat inferior copy of Van Dyck's painting, at Windsor, of Charles I.'s three children.


Edwin Foley

INLAYING

The years have blended the colouring of the inlaid and stained leafage and flowers into mellow harmonies, probably more pleasing to modern tastes than their vivid hues when new inlay. Peculiarly picturesque is the inlaying in mother-o'-pearl, bone, and ebony which rose to popularity in England from about 1625; its Hispano-Moresque details probably resulted from the intercourse during the unsuccessful negotiations for the Spanish marriage.



DETAILS FROM STUART CHIMNEY-PIECE. SOUTH KENSINGTON.

The Civil War and Commonwealth effectually intervened to damp down gay colour development, and it is not until about midway in Charles II.'s reign that the craft of the marqueterie cutter again revived, almost invariably upon walnut furniture, frequently upon an ebony ground. Both ground and pattern were now of veneer: the designs have been cut out of both at one operation, the pieces were fitted and glued together, and afterwards secured by glue (laid down) to the panel or other surface of the piece it was desired to ornament. In addition to the above, the earlier forms of the Charles I. inlaid ornament were arabesque-acanthus of direct Italian inspiration; but realistic floral and bird naturalism with green leaves, and colouring of Dutch derivation, succeeded in the last year or two of Charles II.'s reign, and, continuing through James II.'s brief sovereignty, will be found in further development during the next period.

"OYSTERING"

Typical of the concluding years of the Stuart dynasty are the semicircular endings of the inlaid panels and the "Oystered" veneering (so called from the similarity of appearance to the oyster shell presented by the cross-grained slices of walnut or *Lignum vitæ* boughs from which the veneer was cut).

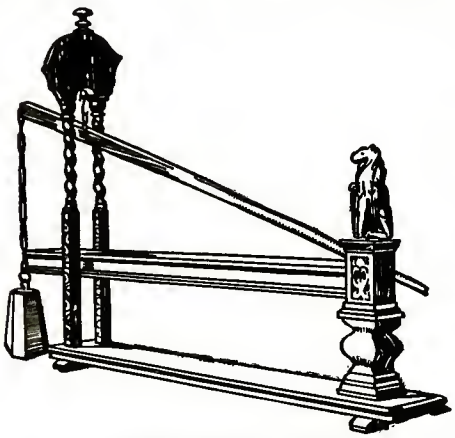
MARQUETERIE TABLE-TOP, WITH OYSTER WORK FRAME.
(SIR GEORGE DONALDSON.)

From the beginning of the Dutch influence in marqueterie, walnut furniture was bleached also, to enhance the effect. Despite the "greenery-yallery" tendency, which age has greatly intensified when laburnum was used, inlaid *mobilia* at the end of the Stuart *régime* is distinctly interesting and possessed of character. It requires, however, the most careful management of the surroundings to produce a "healthy" and harmonious colour scheme.

"THE INDIAN TASTE"

Though examples of that most charming of the decorative processes of the Orient, the art of lacquering, were imported in increasing quantities from the Indies, China, and Japan throughout the seventeenth century, the attempts at reproduction in England from about 1675 were but crude, until the days of William and Mary.

Pieces such as the cheese press and the reading desk herewith, show the wider application of ornamental woodwork to objects of use. Thanks to the Second Duke of Buckingham, "chemist, statesman, fiddler, and buffoon," who was also a manufacturer bringing over craftsmen from Venice to Vauxhall, that they might practise and teach plate-glass making and bevelling, mirrors, indeed, were henceforth to be reckoned among the joys—and sorrows—of daily life. The establishment of the Duke of Buckingham's glass factory at Lambeth, in 1673, gave lovers of their own lineaments the opportunity of viewing them in English-made mirrors for the first time. Whereas before 1673 looking-glass is rarely to be met with in inventories, ere the end of Charles II.'s reign it was extensively used not only as free mirrors, but was inserted in the panelling, at times with considerable ingenuity, as in the king's writing closet at Hampton Court, the mirror of which reflects the entire suite of the apartments.



CARVED CHEESE PRESS.

What more striking instance could be given of the arbitrary and artificial character of style divisions than this Stuart period? Not only are at least three essentially differing modes combined, but varying local acceptances of the swiftly moving changes add to the would-be dogmatist's dilemma.

READING DESK ON SCREW PILLAR. ROYAL SCOTTISH MUSEUM, EDINBURGH.

One leaves the period with regret for space exigencies, and humility for incapacity to further concentrate its many phases more adequately. He must indeed be impregnably clad

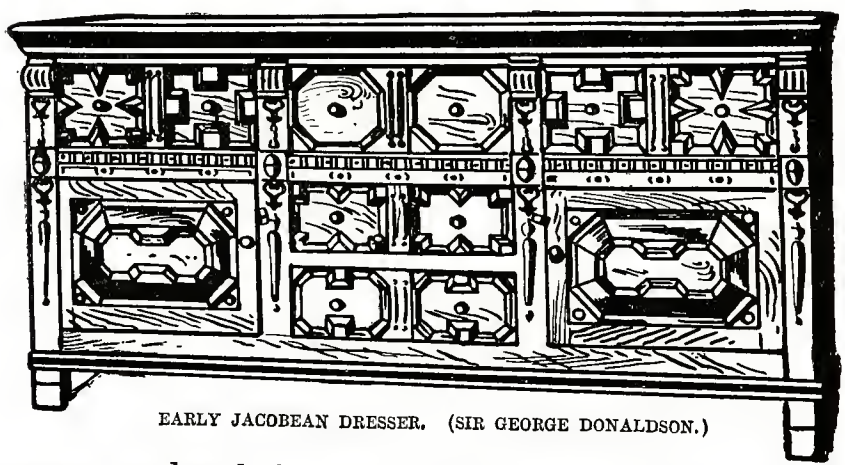
in mental immodesty who can emerge self-satisfied with his attempt at a brief yet adequate presentment of the modes of 1603–1688.

Stuart furniture is deeply significant: reflecting as it does the historic episodes of its period, and at times even prophetic of the nation's political trend.

CARVED OAK MIRROR FRAME. 1603.

To those who possess either illustrations of, or can obtain access to, the examples of woodwork mentioned, the following list, supplementing that given in the Stuart column of the Chart of Styles, will be of value:—

The Long Gallery, Hatfield House (partly late Elizabethan). Pulpit, All Hallows, Barking (Grinling Gibbon). Dining Room, Clopton House, Warwickshire—*circa* 1650. Globe Room, Reindeer Inn, Banbury—*circa* 1650. Pembroke Coll., Cambs. (Wren), Chapel — 1666. Vestry, etc., St. Lawrence Jewry (Grinling Gibbon)—1672. Trinity Coll., Cambs. Library (Wren) —1677. St. Stephens, Walbrook (Wren) — 1678. Hampton Court Palace Chapel, etc. (Wren and Gibbon) —1689 to 1720.


EARLY JACOBEAN DRESSER. (SIR GEORGE DONALDSON.)

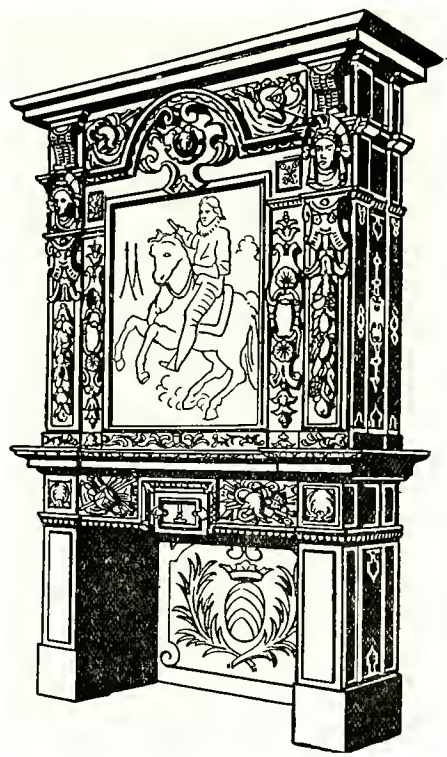
Nor need one forget the fine Stuart Renaissance woodwork in many of the city halls, and upon screens, pulpits, stalls, or panelling of the Wren-built London churches, together with that at St. John's, Leeds, Croscombe, Lanteglos, and a few other provincial churches.

THE LATER RENAISSANCE IN FRANCE, 1589–1643

HENRI IV. OF FRANCE AND NAVARRE, 1589–1610 (QUEEN, 1610–1614).
LOUIS XIII., 1614–1643

HENRI QUATRE and Louis Treize! What exciting if unreal visions do they conjure up of swords and daggers, gallants and bravos, musqueteers and court beauties, moving through swift mazy plot and counterplot, played as a game, yet life and death the stakes, with a background of brilliant if violent contrasts.

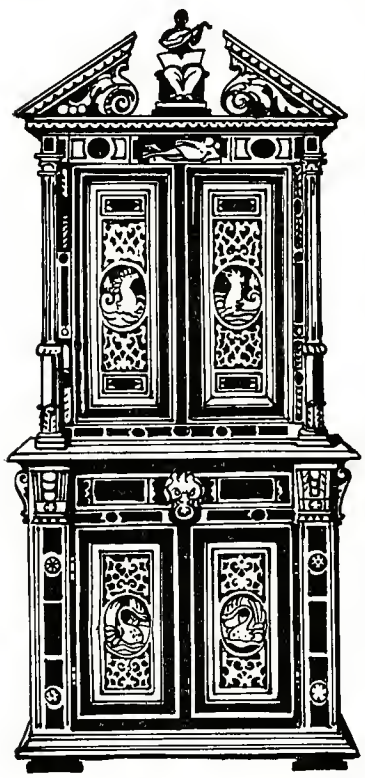
Writers of historical and pseudo-historical romance have made the period so peculiarly their untrammelled and picturesque hunting ground, that would-be veracious historians of modes mobiliary feel almost apologetic for trenching upon the half-century following the decision of the debonair grandsire of our Charles II. —Henry of Navarre—that France was worth a mass.



CHIMNEY-PIECE, LOUIS XIII. CHÂTEAU DE CORMATIN.

The novelist may exercise his imaginative gift upon the woodwork accessories of his scenes, as well as the

deeds of his actors. The chronicler of ornamental furniture would be peculiarly grateful for such a privilege, for, whilst of furnishing equipments during the succeeding reign of Louis XIV., one can form definite judgment based upon authentic data, the close of the sixteenth century and the first half of the seventeenth century lie upon the tantalising borderland of the known-unknown, and much of such information as is available adds to the darkness rather than illuminates.



WALNUT CABINET, WITH PIETRA-DURA PANELS. HENRY III.

A somewhat analogous process to that by which England evolved her Stuart furniture during the period 1603–1688 occurred during the contemporary century in France, comprising the reigns of Henri IV., Louis XIII., and the first half of Louis XIV.'s long government. Italy, Spain, Flanders, and even Germany were requisitioned for such æsthetic inspiration as they could yield. If, until the advent of the styles called after the Fourteenth, Fifteenth, and Sixteenth Louis, France could not with truth claim to have conceived much originality in applied art design, no country has more promptly seized upon the vital germ-conceptions in design of other nations to recast them in congenial and graceful manner.

The influence of the mighty Medici, through its women folk, as potent in France as that of its men in Italy, did not cease with the sixteenth century when François I., Henri II., and Henri III. each found brides from this race of art lovers, whilst Italy and Spain continuously competed for ascendancy in the tastes and diplomacy of Catherine de Medici.

Under

HENRI IV. AND LOUIS XIII.

Italian and Spanish prepossessions are almost as noticeable. The cold bombastic pseudo-classic mode used by the architect Jesuit "coadjutor" Martellange in the execution of the new buildings erected by the order, upon the repeal of their exile (coincident with the commencement of the Stuart era, 1603), was echoed in the design of the interior woodwork. The Italian influence was also, it should be noted, strong in the Netherlands.

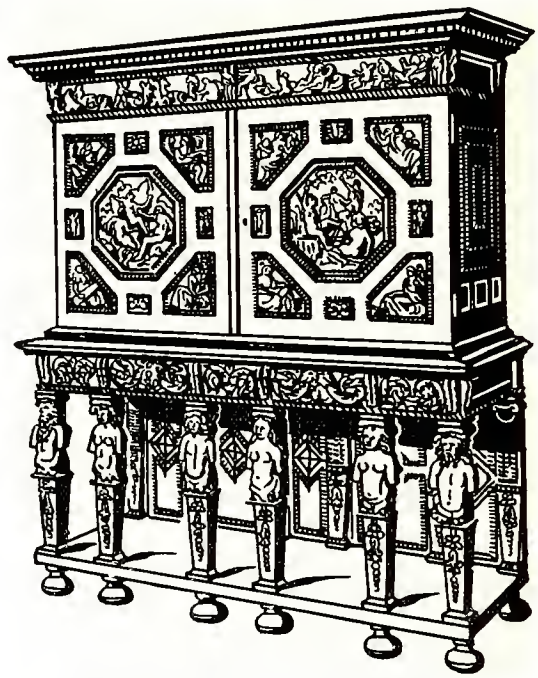
RENAISSANCE BAHUT. MUSÉE DE LOUVRE.

It was to Henry of Navarre, some two years ere the thrice-plunged dagger of Ravaillac stabbed him to the heart, that France owed the official lodgment and organising of design-artists and craftsmen in the galleries of the Louvre: a policy so protective of and encouraging to the applied arts that it was destined to profoundly influence the styles and prestige of French decorative work in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

In the words of the letters patent setting this fruitful action in motion, "We have also in the construction of the Gallery of the Louvre had the thought of ordering the building of such a form as to enable us conveniently to lodge therein a number of the best masters there are to be found, . . . both in order to avail ourselves

MEUBLE A DEUX CORPS. FRENCH. MIDDLE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. MUSÉE CLUNY.

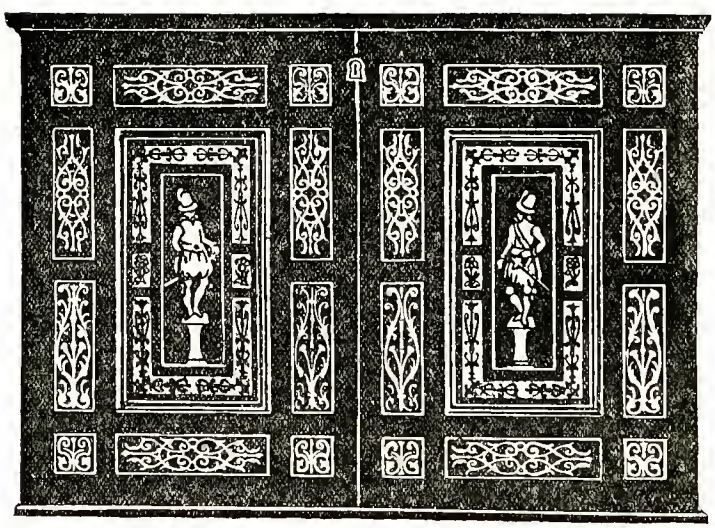
of their services and also to form a training school for workers, from which, under the guidance of such good masters should come artisans who would disperse throughout our kingdom, and be able to serve the public to very good purpose."



BAHUT. LOUIS XIII. FONTAINEBLEAU.

Foreigners as well as Frenchmen were welcomed: indeed, the first woodwork craftsmen appear to have been Laurent Starbe, a Fleming; Jean Macé of Blois, the earliest of well-known *marqueteurs* in France, who also learnt his craft in Flanders; and Pierre Boulle, who appears to have been a Swiss, the uncle of the great Boulle *le Père.*

Something akin to a reign of terror was experienced by the French people and court under the domination of that talented bigot and reputed poisoner, Catherine de Medici. It extended practically through the four reigns of Henri II., François II., Charles IX., and Henri III. The dramatic horrors of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew struck so deeply into the mentality of the times that one does not wonder to find an aftermath in design savouring of the churchyard during the succeeding reigns of Henri Quatre and Louis Treize.



EBONY AND IVORY INLAID CABINET. HENRI IV. PEYRE COLLECTION.

PLATE XXXI

A CABINET OF OAK AND WALNUT, WITH EBONY PANELS AND COLUMNS, INLAID WITH ROSEWOOD AND IVORY ENGRAVED

Originally in Lochleven Castle, and long known as "Queen Mary's Aumerie"
Probably made by French or Flemish craftsmen

In the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh.
Height, 6 ft. 4 in.; length, 5 ft. 8½ in.; depth, 2 ft. 4½ in.

The halo of romantic interest around the memory of Queen Mary of Scots, is not wholly compounded of misfortune and vicissitudes; it also contains another almost as essential ingredient—a leavening of uncertainty. Indeed, contention appears to have ear-marked for its own most things connected with Mary. Even in matters of decorative furniture we have many pieces, obviously of later or earlier date, alleged to have been in her possession. Among them are the late Stuart or William the Third toilet glass, shown among our outline illustrations, and a pearwood casket of the fifteenth century in the British Museum. Nor are the museums the sole possessors of probably spurious relics of Queen Mary; His Majesty's collection at Windsor contains a piece —bequeathed to Queen Victoria by Baron Bellhaven—which, judging from its style, it is quite impossible for the Scottish Queen to have seen.

The persistence, too, with which some late Carolean chairs and a couch at Holyrood Palace, have been linked with Mary Queen of Scots is curious, apart from the century's discrepancy in style, since it seems an historical fact that another Mary—her of Modena—and

another James—Duke of York—finding the interior appointments of Holyrood in 1679 little better than those of a dilapidated barracks, from use by Cromwell's Ironsides, renovated and refurnished it with contemporary furniture during their occupation, which lasted several months.

The most flagrant instance is, however, the fine example of seventeenth-century decorative woodwork, illustrated in the Colour Plate. Much as one would like to believe that the aumerie belonged to the most romantic of Scottish queens, it is obviously impossible to do so without ascribing its manufacture to a period before 1568, the date of Mary's escape from Lochleven Castle after being confined there for a year. If made in Scotland or England, one would hesitate to ascribe to the aumerie an earlier date than 1630; whilst, even if we assume that it was of French or Flemish manufacture, the date indicated by its details is some few years after Mary's detention at Lochleven. Fortunately, the almery or aumerie, which was for many years used by Sir Noël Paton, needs no adventitious history to secure attention; being, indeed, a fine example of seventeenth-century decorative woodwork, probably (the writer considers) by continental craftsmen. It is, from a design standpoint, quite worthy to form part of a queen's belongings.

Edwin Foley '09

It was at the close of the sixteenth century, that the Court of France adopted funeral trunkets, and death's heads appeared on the dresses of ladies. Death and burial became subjects yielding ornament. Death's heads and crossbones were introduced into the *trousseaux*. Court beauties consulted their skull watches to ascertain the time o' day, and sniffed their perfumes from skull-patterned scent bottles. In such an age, though the use of oak, walnut, chestnut, and cedar was not abandoned, ebony was naturally the wood *de rigueur*, and the *huchier* was lost in the *ebéniste*.

The inventory of Catherine de Medici's apartments mentions many pieces of ebony. Its use as an ostensibly constructional wood was undoubtedly much earlier in Italy and in Flanders. Henry of Navarre called these craftsmen *menuisiers en ebéne*; but during the succeeding reign of Louis XIII. the term *ebéniste* was adopted as the trade designation of the cabinetmaker: the strongest evidence of the estimation in which the hard black woods of Madagascar and Ceylon were held at the period. We may reasonably assume that Flemish craftsmanship in the making of the ebony cabinet was at least equal to that of Italy, since it was to Flanders that Henri Quatre sent Pierre Boulle and

CARVED ARMOIRE. FRENCH. LATE SIXTEENTH CENTURY. MUSÉE DE LOUVRE.

CHAIR. CHENONÇEAUX.

other woodworkers to learn the best methods of working the new wood.

The sombre appearance of ebony seems quickly to have been realised. An attempt was made to lighten its gloom when used alone, and in conjunction with ivory by the use of tortoiseshell veneers, and by painting upon the interior panels of enclosing furniture: this development coincided somewhat with Rubens' arrival in Paris at the invitation of Marie de Medici. After Rubens' visit, too, one sees some evidence that the Flemish interpretation of the Renaissance became more favoured, with a corresponding adaptation of the furniture to the home of the private citizen; whilst the increased recognition of comfort as a principle of design is manifested both by the use of arm-chairs and of upholstery.

CHAIR. LOUIS XIII. MUSÉE DE LOUVRE.

That light chairs, in addition to folding chairs, were introduced in France early in the sixteenth century is shown conclusively by the inventory of the household goods of the Duchesse de Valentinois.

ARM-CHAIR. VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM.

At the beginning of Henri Quatre's reign such chairs were being made with rush seats in Italy, but it was not until much later that the lighter forms had practically supplanted the heavier and more sumptuous types of upholstered seats, although the *coquetoire* chair is mentioned in French inventories of the days of Charles IX. Until its arrival, arms to chairs appear to have been the rule in France: they were discarded there, as in England, owing to the dress fashions. Mazarin's inventory of 1653 shows that chairs had by that

ate become common in France, since several dozens are mentioned. ncluded in the inventory of Fontainebleau are twelve chairs and welve *escabeaux* (X-stools without backs), no mention being made of ny high arm-chair for the upper end of the table.

THE BED

ke the chair, frequently accompanied its noble owner upon his ourneys, and was probably usually of the form known as *lits en hasse.* Mobility was still much considered in decorative furniture.

In beds of Louis Treize period — of the *lit en housse* type — he wood, when not covered by a textile fabric, was almost concealed y the textile garnishings.

UPHOLSTERY

It must be conceded that French upholstery in its early stages was by no means the embodiment of luxurious ease: straw as a tuffing material leaves much to be desired, as ny one who has slept (?) upon a straw palliasse will bear witness.

The *tapissier* was the decorator whose productions were most desired: indeed, the *motifs* nd materials used in the rich textures of Louis XIII. display an almost world-embracing earch after beauty and novelty of pattern.

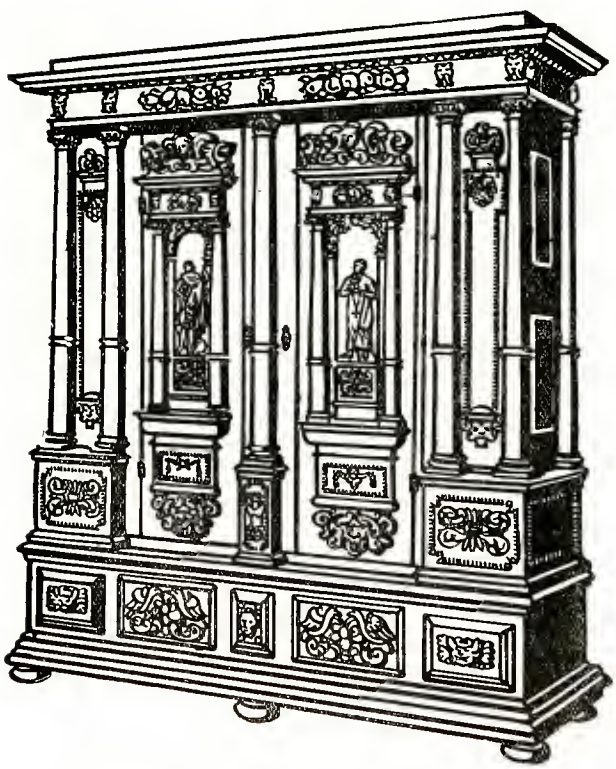
The windows were draped by a curtain uspended from oak or walnut cornices, according with the wood used for the panelling. The anopy or *ciel,* supported on four posts, nearly ouched the ceilings. France was largely indebted at this period to Dutch initiative and

FAUTEUIL. LOUIS XIII. FONTAINEBLEAU.

enterprise for introduction to the arts of China and the Far East; though it must not be forgotten that she also commenced at this period to make perfunctory efforts, through successively formed East India Companies, to acquire a share in the importation to Europe of lacquer work and other produce of the Orient. The importations of Celestial work into Europe were so valued and welcome that woven fabrics *à la Chinoise* were made at Lyons, as well as in that old mart of Eastern arts, Venice.

A curious freak of Louis Treize days is the "auricular style" invented by Rabel, one of the many designers of the period, whose vagaries in this peculiar ear-shaped ornament were, however, outtrumped by the German workers.

The woodwork designs of Barbet, published in 1633 and dedicated to Cardinal Richelieu, evince Italian rather than French feeling, and pupilage to architecture rather than woodwork.



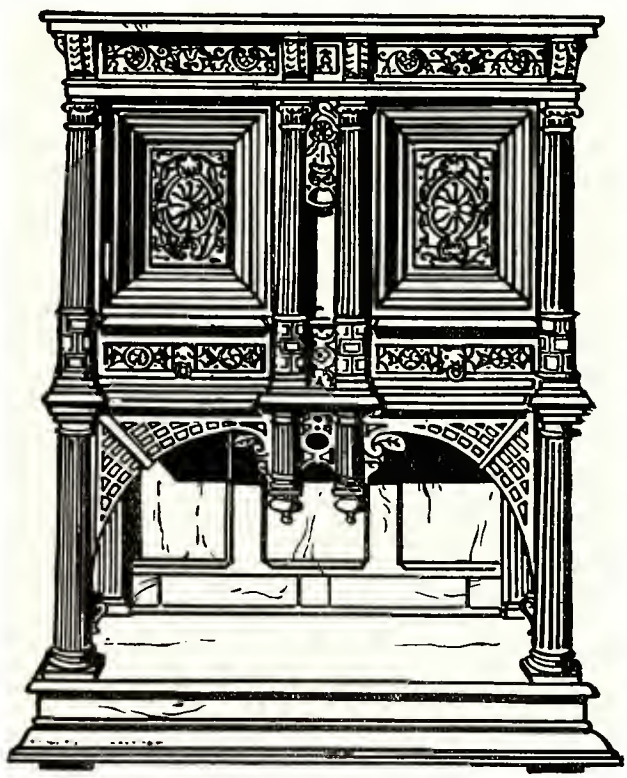
ARMOIRE. RENAISSANCE. CHÂTEAU D'ANET.

The forms ascribed to the ornamentists of Louis Quatorze days are distinctly foreshadowed towards the end of those of Louis Treize; the initiative being largely the work of one man, Simon Vouet (1590–1649), who in 1627 was recalled from his Italian studies by Louis XIII. to become Court Painter and the master of Lebrun; whilst Mignard, who taught Louis XIII. crayon drawing, decorated the Palais Cardinal for Richelieu, and designed much tapestry

work, introduced into his later compositions floral detail in conjunction with scroll work.

Though the reigns of Henri Quatre and Louis Treize cannot in matters of applied art compare with that of Louis le Grand, yet they witnessed the inception of the official support to art-crafts (of which the fruits were reaped in the later reign), and were architecturally memorable for the erection of the Luxembourg Palace and the Palais Cardinal, rechristened the Palais Royal, when Richelieu, as penance for his indiscreetly wealthy patronage of the arts, bestowed it together with a large portion of his collection housed therein upon his royal master, Louis XIII.—a transaction curiously reminiscent of Wolsey, Hampton Court, and Henry the Eighth.

It is in the reign of Louis Treize that one first finds evidence of the considerable use of parquet for the flooring of great buildings.



BAHUT. LOUIS XIII.

PLATE XXXII

THE PUTNAM CUPBOARD OF ENGLISH OAK AND CEDAR

Presented to the Essex Institute, Salem, by
Miss Harriet Putnam Fowler

CARVED SETTLE OF AMERICAN OAK

Found in a stable at Barrington, Massachusetts.
Now in the Bulkeley Collection

One may feel assured that the homes of the early colonists of New England were but scantily furnished; scarcely a tithe of the furniture claimed to have been brought over by the *Mayflower* can have been stowed in that gallant little barque, whilst much is of later period than the year of the historic voyage; even articles of indubitable Chippendale period having been credited with a passage!

No claim to Mayflower status is advanced on behalf of the fine cupboard with drawers which Miss Harriet Putnam Fowler of Danvers, Massachusetts, a descendant of John Putnam who settled in Salem in 1634, presented to the Essex Institute of that city. John Putnam imported it probably about the middle of the seventeenth century, as the chest of drawers which forms its lower part was not developed earlier, nor were the geometrical patterns of the cedar mouldings used in combination with the split balusters upon the pilasters, until that date.

Upon its back are marks of a fire from which the cupboard was rescued when, some two centuries ago, the Putnams' house was destroyed.

Certain vase finials which surmounted the posts, "improvements" suggested by the taste of an eighteenth-century member of the family, have been removed.

The enclosed box-settle with lifting lid in the Bulkeley Collection is almost unique among examples of colonial woodwork; when discovered in a stable it had for many years been used to hold salt for cattle. It illustrates the earliest of the English modes of combining the chest and the table which produced the settle. The panelled framing of the seat indicates that cushions were intended. The usual type of earlier colonial settle more nearly resembled the high-back variety one finds in old village inns in this country: cosy and picturesque, they are hard to beat for homely comfort. They were drawn in front of the fire upon a winter's night—especially when of curved shape, as in some old English inns until recent days—for the sake of light as well as warmth, in those days when the feeble flicker of the "Betty" lamp, of which we have shown an example, was the sole other illumination.

Edwin Foley '09

FIRST CHAPTER ON COLONIAL FURNITURE IN AMERICA, 1607–1783

THE curiously interesting subject of the furniture used by the American colonies before their severance from the British Crown has been treated with conspicuous fullness and ability in the several works mentioned in the Bibliography; but inasmuch as they have been written by Americans for Americans, they assume a knowledge, on the reader's part, of the early colonial history of the United States, which it must be confessed the British reader does not usually possess, and without which he is handicapped in any attempt to construct an intelligible picture of the interrelations between colonial household goods and colonial life. It is precisely upon such points that the British reader is most curious, in any account of the fine old examples of English, Dutch, Spanish, and other continental craftsmanship imported ere the United States severed their political connection with the Old Country.

It cannot be claimed that colonial woodwork developed a distinctive style, or characteristics, independent of European influence. During the first hundred years the older settlers and their descendants were far too occupied in their struggle with nature and the original inhabitants to have either the leisure, inclination, or ability for the satisfaction of æsthetic faculties; whilst the craftsmen continually arriving from Europe were naturally imbued with the modes of their native land, and probably would have received scant encouragement had they departed materially from the Old World fashions.

During the eighteenth century one at times detects traces of original treatment in colonial furniture, but throughout the period of the union of the colonies with Great Britain were practically dominated by the tastes of the old countries. The genius of the New World has been too absorbed by the commercial and material aspect of life to have yet added much to any form of æsthetics.

By colonial furniture is usually meant the household equipments which were in use in the American settlements up to the time of their severance from the English Crown, whether imported from the various countries of Europe or made in the colonies. This definition would exclude the furniture brought from Europe by the earliest colonists of the sixteenth century, the Spaniards who settled in Florida, for their use while cultivating their rich plantations in the days of the zenith of Spanish power, ere the Dutch and English had planted their colonies, and indeed whilst North America was practically unknown. Cortez and Pizarro can have taken little furniture with them upon their expeditions, which enriched Spain with the golden treasures of the New World; though they sent many a bar of silver from which was made the silver furniture used so lavishly in Spain, until its manufacture was prohibited.

The following chronological summary of events and dates will be found to materially add to the knowledge of, and interest in, the story of decorative colonial furniture.

SOME RELEVANT DATES IN COLONIAL FURNITURE HISTORY

1513 Spaniards in Florida under Ponce de Leon (Bancroft).
1565 First Spanish settlement in Florida.
1565 Rise of the Puritans in England.
1584 Raleigh attempts settlements in North Carolina, or Pennsylvania.

1607 First plantation land in Virginia. First English settlement.
1604–1608 French settlement in Canada.
1613–14 Block winters at New York.
1615 First Dutch settlement on Hudson, by Christiansen.
1620 Plymouth Fathers land from *Mayflower* at Plymouth Rock.
1620–40 Considerable emigration by Dissenters.
1634 Colonisation of Maryland by "Aristocrats"; during Commonwealth by Royalists.
1638 Colony of New Haven established.
1643 Union of colonies in Massachusetts, Plymouth, Connecticut, and New Haven, for mutual defence against Dutch, French, and Indians.
1664 New Amsterdam (New York) taken from the Dutch.
1676 Rebellion in Virginia.
1681 William Penn granted Pennsylvania.
1754 Benjamin Franklin's plan for permanent general settlement of colonies rejected by colonies and Home Government.
1759 Capture of Quebec. British supremacy in North America.
1763 Canada ceded to Great Britain.
1773 Boston tea riots.
1775 Revolution of the colonies.
1776 Declaration of Independence.
1783 Acknowledgment by Great Britain of Independence of the United States of America.

THE EARLY ENGLISH SETTLEMENTS IN VIRGINIA AND NEW ENGLAND

Sir Walter Raleigh does not appear to have taken any furniture with him for the use of the colonists upon either of his attempted settlements in 1584 in North Carolina or Pennsylvania.

EARLY SOUTHERN

The real history of the English colonial settlements opens in 1606, when James the First granted concessions to the London Company, despite the prior gift by the Pope of the whole of the American continent to Spain!

The hundred gentlemen—adventurers and labourers—who formed the first plantation of English settlers in Virginia in 1607, landed upon the soil of the New World with little more than the barest outfit of tools, clothing, and food. They employed themselves for several months chiefly in digging what they imagined to be gold ore, which upon being assayed in England proved to be "dirt." When the first supply arrived some nine months later they found forty survivors living in cabins and holes in the ground, nothing having been done towards building, beyond cutting their own masts, cedar, black walnut, and making clap-boards.

Earthen houses were built by the first supply, but fell into ruin in a year or two, and the colonists' condition was shortly worse than before, as clothing and equipments sent out by the second supply were lost in transit. They endured the "Starving Times," falling into cannibalism, until Lord Delaware, arriving in 1610, slightly improved their lot.

Many of the early emigrants were evidently unfitted for the enterprise,—they are described as playing bowls in the streets of Jamestown while their houses were crumbling to pieces. "Unruly gallants packed hither to escape ill destinies" is their description by the most picturesquely heroic of all the Smiths, Captain John Smith, who saved the colony of Virginia from destruction by the Indians.

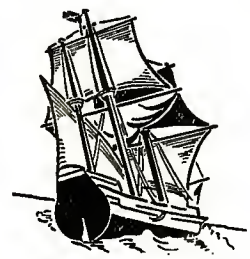
The success attending tobacco planting greatly assisted the Virginian colonies towards prosperity.

THE "MAYFLOWER" (1620)—NEW ENGLAND

The arrival of the *Mayflower* in 1620 was a turning-point in the story of the English colonisation of America, bringing into the service

of the New English settlements such men as Winslow, Elder Brewster, Bradford, Governor Winthrop, Miles Standish and his friend John Alden, of "Why don't you speak for yourself, John?" celebrity.

One speculates on the very different course which British politics, home and colonial, might have taken, had Oliver Cromwell carried out his intention of becoming a settler. That he would speedily have taken rank among the leaders can scarcely be doubted; but his career, if less momentous, might have been equally stormy, for the early settlers in New England were not, as one is prone to suppose, all Puritans, "Schismatics," and Nonconformists; many of the four thousand who had arrived by 1634, came as much to secure freedom from taxation as to obtain liberty for religious opinions; many also were wealthy and of good birth. They included numbers of university men, who represented learning until Harvard and Yale were founded.



THE "MAYFLOWER," FROM AN OLD ENGRAVING.

MARYLAND

The State of Maryland, started in 1634, was particularly favoured by the "aristocratic party," large numbers of Royalists emigrating there during the Commonwealth.

PENNSYLVANIA

Penn received the grant of land, upon which he founded the colony which bears his name in 1681; as success became assured, men of wealth as well as yeomen and labourers joined him.

Just as the Dutch settlers endeavoured to obtain a counterpart of Holland in New Holland, so the wealthier of the English imported their furniture and tried to reproduce English home life.

Under the leaders we have mentioned, and others, the settlements

emerged from poverty and built more permanent homes, though Governor Butler states "that the meanest English cottages were more sightly and comfortable than the best dwelling in Virginia." Settlers from England were in 1621, enjoined by Governor Edward Winslow to bring paper and linseed oil for the windows of the first rough-hewn timber houses; but by 1629 glass was evidently in use, for intending colonists are then told to furnish themselves with that material.

HOUSES IN EARLY NEW ENGLAND

The destruction of settlements by the Indians in 1622, caused the colonists to live closer together for mutual protection, and to build stronger and larger houses, with space for furniture of more decorative character. Framed houses gradually supplanted the clapboard and shingle log cabins, and by the middle of the century brick was in use, the doors being studded with nails to protect against their cleavage by Indian tomahawks. Hawthorne's description of the House of the Seven Gables in his work of that title—with its many lattices of diamond-shaped panels to admit light into the hall and chambers—is of an actual old house in Salem believed to have been erected ere the middle of the seventeenth century.

FRENCH AND SPANISH SETTLEMENTS

We have little excuse for concerning ourselves with the story of the genesis of French colonial settlement in Canada, so full of picturesque vicissitudes, from the sailing of the first ships in 1604 and the first establishment in Port Royal. Though Marie de Medicis contributed money for the support of the Jesuit missions which followed when Champlain raised the white flag of France over Quebec in 1608, no records have been found relative to the furnishings of the early colonists. Canada, it will be remembered, was not

ceded to Great Britain until 1763, and its people continued until far later to be more French than English in their affinities; moreover, it must be confessed, that at no time has the land of the maple contributed materially to the decorative side of colonial furniture in America.

Nor need we dwell in this chapter upon the yet more romantic history of Spanish settlements in Florida, the first of which occurred in 1513, under the aged warrior Ponce de Leon.

It will be well, before proceeding further with the tale of the mobiliary belongings of the American colonies, to trace the vicissitudes affecting the decorative woodwork of the Dutch settlements upon the banks of the Hudson, which the capture of New Amsterdam united under the British Crown, from 1664 until 1776.

THE DUTCH SETTLEMENTS UPON THE HUDSON—NEW AMSTERDAM (1613–1664) (NEW YORK 1664–1776)

The political, religious, and commercial relations of Holland and England, during the seventeenth century, are singularly reflected in the woodwork of the colonies. When Holland freed herself from the rule of Spain, and began the settlements on the banks of the Hudson, Dutch mastery of the seas enabled them to trade with all parts of the world, to bring from China the new China drink *tchae* (destined to be the ostensible immediate cause of Britain's loss of her American colonies), and from Spain and Italy, ebony, cane, and other furniture. The industrious Hollanders carried their choicer exports of household furniture—Flanders chests and the like—to England, and took back in exchange wool, tin, lead, and similar raw materials. In 1609 Hudson sailed up the river, known by his name, as far as Albany. In 1613–14 the city of New York was virtually begun by Captain Block, who, having lost his ship the *Tigris* and

cargo, wintered there, in order to build himself another ship—the *Onrust.* "Probably the first furniture brought to the shores of the Hudson," says Miss Singleton in her work on the subject, "came in the ship *Fortune* with Hendrich Christiansen of Cleep, who founded a settlement of four houses and thirty persons in 1615. Shortly after came the *Tiger*, the *Little Fox*, and the *Nightingale*, all with colonists and their furniture.

THE WEST INDIA COMPANY

sent their furniture with the thirty families who crossed in 1625. During the following year the colonists purchased 22,000 acres of Manhattan Island, for twenty-four dollars' worth of beads, from the Indians, whom they further conciliated from time to time by presents. In consequence of this policy, the Dutch settlements experienced much less trouble with the original owners than did those of New England, though once New Amsterdam was nearly destroyed. Indeed, the Dutch colonists were far more prosperous and comfortable than the English settlers: the music of a circular saw sent from Holland, and driven by wind-power, being heard in the New World as early as 1627.

If the furniture of the early settlements of New Holland was typical of the eighteen nationalities who composed the first three hundred settlers, it must have been of extreme interest, but no undoubted pieces have survived.

A somewhat unique colonial relic credited to the earlier Swedish colonists upon the Hudson is preserved in the Memorial Hall, Philadelphia: a chest clamped with bands of pierced iron being much more suggestive of Spanish or Portuguese, than of Swedish derivation.

Though most of the houses, for many years after the capture of New Amsterdam from the Hollanders and Swedes, were one storey in height and contained but two rooms, New Amsterdam—with its

PLATE XXXIII

WALNUT KAS INLAID AND WITH PAINTED MEDALLIONS OF DELFT WARE

The Pruyn Collection, Albany, U.S.A.

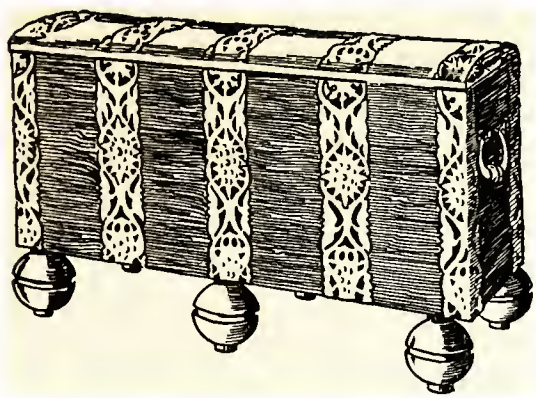
Width over cornice and base, 5 ft. 5 in.; depth over cornice and base, 2 ft. 4 in.; depth over base, 2 ft. 0½ in.; height from floor, 7 ft.

It would be difficult to find among the many *kasses* which have been zealously treasured by generations of descendants of the early Dutch settlers in New Holland, a more picturesque and better preserved example than this distinctive Batavian cupboard. Its forty-five Delft plaques—for there are seven upon each end in addition to the thirty-one upon the front—picture in characteristic Dutch-tile fashion scenes upon land, sea, and from the Scriptures.

The *kas* of the seventeenth century was more frequently carved or painted than inlaid. Its derivation may have been German, and the De Vries were probably the originators of its more decorative types. The Pruyn piece has, however, but little in common with the De Vries designs, being of considerably later date.

The woollen pile carpet shown above and behind the *kas*, is that presented to the Girdler's company by their then master, Mr. Robert Bell in 1634. This particular example did not cross the seas after its first voyage from India to Britain, though the richer colonists' homes, judging from inventories, appear to have contained much rich Eastern loomwork. It may be a needless reminder to mention that fine carpets were, until the eighteenth century, more usually hung upon the walls than placed upon the floors.

canals, streams, flat meadows, and long water front—must have quickly become very reminiscent of his native land to the Dutch colonist, as he gathered round him his typical equipments. Outside upon the *stoep* were usually placed wooden seats. Inside, cleanliness and solid comfort reigned under the eye of the stout *vrouw*, with her fluted white cap, and skirt too short to conceal the bright tulip-patterned "clocks" of her stockings and shining shoe buckles. The windows were small, but at night the blazing logs cast lights and shadows from their wide ingle,—with its jack-spits, pots, pans, skillets, and kettles—on the boarded or white-washed walls, the noisy lantern clock, the china cupboard, and the carved, painted, inlaid or undecorated clothes-press or *kas*, such as that illustrated in our Colour Plate No. XXXIII. and the example herewith sketched.



SPANISH OR SWEDISH CHEST. MEMORIAL HALL, PHILADELPHIA.

To this day, in the originally Dutch colonial districts, may be seen a few of the old low-ceiling'd rooms with big chimney corners, and beds built into the room after the Flemish and Breton fashion. Such beds were hung with bright purple calico and chintz curtains.

CARVED WALNUT KAS. *CIRCA* 1650. *Property of* MRS. HENRY BEEKMAN.

For many years after the English occupation of New Amsterdam the furniture was entirely influenced by the Dutch importations of

their own manufactures and those of the Indies; at the end of the century New York, under its new name and rulers, became, if not a home station, at least a repairing base for pirates. The merchants were ever ready for a trade venture promising good returns, with Spanish and French enemies of the crown, or with freebooters; they bought plunder from captured ships with as little compunction as they sold "fire-water," muskets, and powder, to the Indians. Many a New York merchant's home in those days was a veritable collection of curios from all parts of the Eastern and Western worlds, containing pieces of decorative furniture, orientalware, lacquer, silks, and other fabrics.

CAPTAIN KIDD

A fairly accurate idea of the contents of a well-to-do colonist's home at the close of the seventeenth century, is conveyed by reading the long inventory of the property of the redoubtable Captain Kidd's wife, who married him in 1691, and lived happily with him until he set out on his famous piratical excursions in the *Adventure*, which were terminated by his execution in May 1701. Mrs. Kidd possessed, among other items,—

54 Chairs of Turkey work.
2 dozen single nailed chairs valued at £1, 16s.
5 Tables with their carpets (covers).
4 Curtain beds.
3 Chests of drawers.
2 Dressing boxes.
4 Looking-glasses, screens, chafing dishes, fenders.
100 oz. of silver plate, leathern fire-buckets, and many other objects.

Students of piratical literature may be interested to learn that the marriage to Captain Kidd was but an incident in the matrimonial

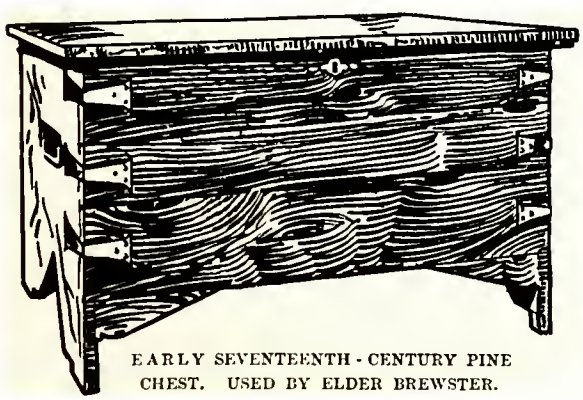
career of his wife; she had married twice ere she met him, and did not mourn his decease overlong, taking a fourth husband two years later, and living until 1745.

Without desiring to suggest that the subject is germane to Captain Kidd's piratical exploits, may we remind Englishmen, fond of quoting among the "faults of the Dutch" that of "giving too little and asking too much," that Great Britain during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries assimilated not only the style of Holland in decorative furniture but annexed her colonies the world over? Such was the fate in 1664 of the Dutch settlement of New Amsterdam, on the shores of the Hudson, whilst the lands discovered by the bold Dutch navigators in Australia and New Zealand are, with Cape Colony, now part of the British Empire.

Reserving our review of the bulk of surviving pieces for the next chapter on the subject, we confine our summary of existing colonial decorative furniture in this chapter to chests, court cupboards, settles, and earlier chairs.

CHESTS

Colonial inventories until about the middle of the seventeenth century make no reference to other furniture than chests, tables, chairs, and bedsteads. In New England, as in the Old Country, the chest was the foremost article of furniture, until at least the middle of the seventeenth century; when chests with drawers are first mentioned in Colonial inventories.



EARLY SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY PINE CHEST. USED BY ELDER BREWSTER.

Somewhat singularly, the Dutch colonists, despite the popularity of the Flemish chests as an article of exportation to

other lands, do not appear to have been partial to chests in New Amsterdam.

Though some few old oak chests without drawers are to be found in New England—such as Elder Brewster's chest—probably nine-tenths were plain and of pine wood. The first settlers, both Dutch and English, appear to have packed their goods in "ships' chests" of that wood.

Many seventeenth-century chests, apparently of drawers, prove upon trial to have fixed fronts, panelled out in geometrical patterns of Stuart days. Early indentures show a most "plentiful lack" of both household furniture and money,—such chattels as are mentioned being appraised at per pound of tobacco; for instance: "three kettells, a chest and chayer and other householde stuffe" are valued at 100 pounds of tobacco.

Towards the end of the seventeenth century the joiners of the New World seem to have made many duplicates of certain patterns of carved chests,—an early perception of the commercial advantages of making in quantities, which has since been a chief feature of American business methods. They particularly favoured the pattern known as the "Hadley," from the number of specimens found near that place. The vine pattern thereon was obtained by sinking the ground, and by incised lines; the effect being heightened by stains of brown, black, and red.

Chests without drawers were little made after the first few years of the eighteenth century, the advent of the chests with drawers being fatal to their popularity.

THE OLD ENGLISH COURT CUPBOARDS

so called from *court* being the French equivalent for short, not from their use at Court—were as much in demand in New England as in the Old Country. Frequently, as in England, the term was applied

PLATE XXXIV

AN EARLY VIRGINIAN COLONIST'S PARLOUR

Oak "Drawinge" Table, in the possession of the Pickering Family, Salem, U.S.A., from 1636.

Oak Bible Box, Connecticut Historical Society, U.S.A.

Elder Brewster's Chair, Pilgrims' Hall, Plymouth, Mass., U.S.A.

The English "Drawinge" table is an evolution from the table *a rallonge* first made in France about 1550. The "Drawinge" table, which can be drawn out at each end and thus give double its normal accommodation, is made upon a principle so sensible and solid that one wonders at its disuse in favour of the screw-extension method of the modern dining-table.

The two end portions of the top, which when closed slide under the central part of the top, are fastened to graduated brackets—an ingeniously simple mechanism preventing any scratching to their upper surfaces whilst being pulled out or in. The centre part of the top drops by its own weight, level with the end portions. French extension tables have, instead of runners or brackets, draw-frames to afford support to these side-leaves.

The mechanism was regarded by Sheraton—no indiscriminate lover of old methods—as so good that he suggested its adoption for writing and other tables, and gave all the necessary technical details for making the slides.

The Pickering table, an undoubted importation from the Old Country, is of oak, the bulbs upon the turning being black, a favourite

method of decorating this class of table. The mitred canted stretcher below was an attempt (which time has proved to be successful) to obtain strength without interfering with the sitter's comfort; the straight bottom rail of the earlier forms of table and chair, though constructionally ideal, being somewhat in the way of the feet, and apt to be disconcerting *criteria* of the sitter's power of memory after dining and wining.

The oak Bible box preserved by the Connecticut Historical Society, one of the many societies existing in the States for the salvage and preservation of old work, bears on its front the date 1649—some fifty years after the earliest extant examples. The carved plant form is a characteristic decoration. It is a moot point whether such boxes were made independently of stands, but those existing with their original stands, appear to have added the functions of writing desks, and have almost invariably slightly sloping lids, whereas those unprovided with stands frequently have flat lids.

Elder Brewster's chair in Pilgrims' Hall, Plymouth, U.S.A., is of the order of turned chair usually known as "carvers" chairs. Its original flag or bulrush latticed seat has disappeared, otherwise its condition is much as when it crossed the seas some three hundred years ago.

The Frisian "birdcage" or "chamber" clock, dated 1635, an alarm clock, shown with the original cord attachments and without the weights, or the long pendulum since affixed, is of similar type to that in Mr. Megatt's well-known collection; whilst that calorific comforter so dear to our forefathers, the bed-warming pan, belongs to a type of which several examples are as religiously preserved in the States, as in the country of its origin.

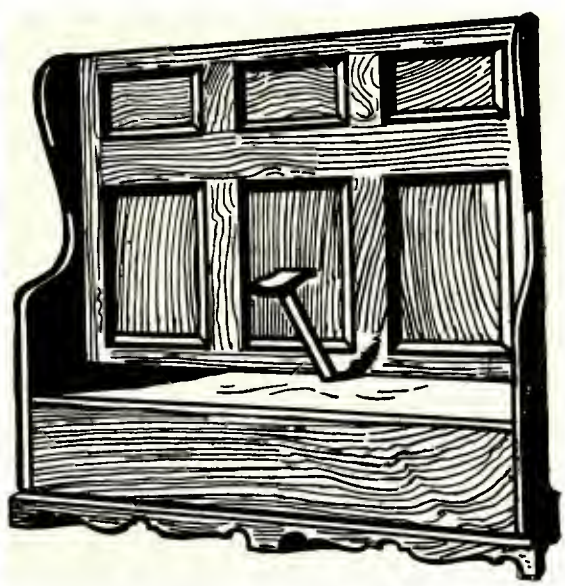
to tiers of shelves with little if any actual cupboard accommodation, and but some 3 ft. in length and even less in height, by 21 in. wide.

The purchasing power of money in both the United States and England has sadly diminished since the end of the sixteenth century, when carved court cupboards were appraised at from half a crown to five shillings. In less than fifty years values doubled, judging from English and New England inventories. By the middle of the seventeenth century the new-fashioned chests of drawers were worth two pounds each.

No court cupboards, either with or without their cloths, carpets, and cushions, are mentioned in inventories of New Amsterdam furniture; but their absence is quite compensated for by the picturesque china cabinets, and the *kas*, which at times reached imposing proportions, and was used to store the linens, napkins, and other valued household textiles, as well as the silver, pewter, and brass garniture.

SETTLES AND BENCHES

The early mention in inventories of settles occurs in 1641. The first forms in the American colonies appear to have been of patterns similar to those found in out-of-the-way village inns in England to this day. The backs were high, and were usually carried down to the floor to protect against draught; the shaped ear or wing pieces at each end protected the sitter, as well as supported the seat, the locker underneath the seat, and the back.



EARLY AMERICAN SETTLE WITH FOLDING STAND FOR CANDLES.

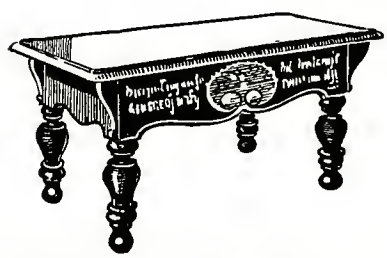
Such settles were occasionally provided with shelves in the centre of the back for candles. They were usually of pine, lightly made, and with shallow seats, that they might be more easily drawn up to the fire. A handsome type of distinctly English design—although made in America of American oak—is the carved and panelled settle from the Bulkeley Collection (shown in Colour Plate XXXII.). On looking at such a piece one clearly sees that the settle was but a chest with arms and a back.

Even in England, old oak furniture gave way to newer fashions, and was either destroyed outright or, drifting like the Bulkeley settle into stables, was employed, like it, for storing salt or other base uses. As Lowell puts it in the *Biglow Papers*:—

> But the old chest won't sarve her granson's wife,
> (For 'thout new furniture what good in life?)
> And so old claw-foot, from the precinks dread
> O' the spare chamber, slinks into the shed,
> Where, dim with dust, it fust and last subsides,
> To holdin' seeds an' fifty other things besides.

SEATS

The Pilgrim Fathers on crossing to the New World did not leave behind them the points of seating precedence, which caused, as has been seen, so much trouble in the Old World: one of the chief duties of their New England churchwardens was to "seat" the meeting in specified order in—



DUTCH-COLONIAL VROUW'S STOOL. PAINTED BLACK. HISTORICAL SOCIETY, ALBANY, U.S.A.

> The godly house of worship, where in order due and fit,
> As by public vote directed, classed and ranked, the people sit.

Cylindrical foot-warmers, containing charcoal, were used in the unheated churches by the women, during winter services, to minimise

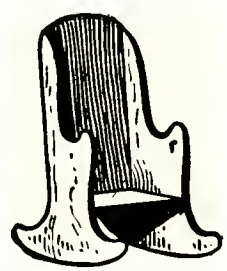
the cold; but the men, even though the communion bread was frozen hard, regarded any such artificial heating as a sign of effeminacy. In the New Holland colony the *vrouws* also kept their feet from the cold floor during service by using footstools, usually painted black and decorated with uncompromisingly pessimistic texts and pictures of the Last Judgment.

CHAIRS

A systematic attempt to trace all the forms of chairs and other seats employed for the ease of the colonial forefathers, is neither possible in this chapter nor necessary, since, in the main, the shapes follow those of European models.

TURNED CHAIR. SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

In Tudor days, and when the first Virginian settlers crossed the Atlantic in the early years of James I.'s reign, the chair was not in general use, but reserved for the master or honoured guest,—forms and stools or benches being the usual seats. When these were made the same length as the table, they were called "long forms"; short forms, sometimes termed "joint stools," being used at the ends of the table. Both forms and stools are frequently mentioned in early colonial inventories.



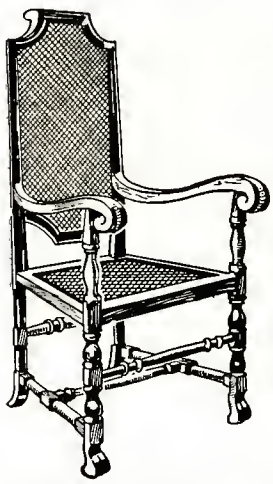
CHILD'S ROCKING CHAIR. ALBANY INSTITUTE.

Doubtless the first chairs of the English colonists were either turned "armed cheares with fine rushe bottoms," or the solidly built wainscot or enclosed chairs. Of the first kind is Elder Brewster's chair—traditionally a Mayflower piece—shown in Colour Plate No. XXXIV., and therewith described; a descendant of the turned Old English kind—a notable example of which, the

president's chair at Harvard College — is referred to by Wendell Holmes in his lines :—

A chair of oak—
Funny old chair with seat like wedge,
Sharp behind and broad front edge,
One of the oddest of human things,
Turned all over with nobs and rings;
But heavy, and wide, and deep, and grand,
Fit for the worthies of the land,—
Chief Justice Sewell, a cause to try in,
Or Cotton Mather to sit—and lie—in."

Turned chairs of the colonies were usually of hickory or maple, and seem to have been copied in the settlements from Old Country models at an early period. To copy the solid old wainscot chair (the other style) was beyond the resources of colonial workers for many years, as it was almost invariably carved, and with stout stretchers to strengthen the under frame. To render the oaken seat more comfortable, cushions were, as in England, used, judging from such items as "a greate cheare and quoshen," found in the inventories of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. We have already paid tribute to the naïve inscription upon that interesting survival—historically and decoratively—of the wainscot order, William Penn's chair in Independence Hall, Philadelphia :—



WILLIAM PENN'S CHAIR. INDEPENDENCE HALL, PHILADELPHIA.

I know not where, I know not when,
But in this chair sat William Penn.

The last word in dogmatism surely, but as an affidavit not likely to satisfy a judge, or even a jury. Succeeding the wainscot chairs, were the leather-seated

LEATHER-BACKED SPANISH CHAIR. LATE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. PHILADELPHIA.

Cromwellian, the cane-seated Carolean, and the stuffed Queen Anne, chairs, all represented in colonial decorative furniture. More unusual to English eyes is the nail-studded Spanish chair in the Memorial Hall, Philadelphia, with interlaced scrolls upon the front brace, and decorated leather seat and back: the front feet are so characteristic of the furniture of Old Spain that they are generally known as the "Spanish foot," in contradistinction to the more "scrolly" Flemish foot.

PLATE XXXV

THE "RUBENS" CABINET—OF EBONY CARVED. INTERIOR FITTINGS INLAID AND COLUMNS OF TORTOISESHELL

From the Royal Collection at Windsor Castle. By permission of His Majesty.

Height, 7 ft. 8 in.; width, 7 ft. 2 in.; depth, 2 ft. 3 in.

This cabinet, one of the finest examples of craftsmanship in ebony extant, was probably made in Flanders, and during the early part of the seventeenth century.

The subjects of the figure panels are both Biblical and classical, and display an amazing command of technique in the manner in which the peculiarly obstinate ebony has been sculptured. Although necessarily in comparatively low relief, from the nature of the wood, the modelling of the chief figures is absolutely sharply defined.

Not content with the patience and skill he has displayed on the exterior, the artist has represented on the inside in panels an Annunciation (with Queen Henrietta Maria), and that queen presenting her son to Charles I. These panels, apart from their artistic interest enable one to approximately fix the date.

The cabinet inside is fitted on each side with six drawers carved on their faces with figure subjects,—and also veneered inside with geometrical designs. Below, in further veneers, are backgammon and chess boards. Between the drawers the central recess relieves the sombre colouring by tortoiseshell and gilt columns, when not covered by the two carved doors inlaid in ivory upon their inner sides, but now concealed by drawings in *gouache* of ancient Roman

architecture signed "*Cleriseau fecit Rome, 1763,*"—being the work of Chambers' teacher and the friend of the brothers Adam.

It will be remembered that the waved mouldings so plentifully used upon this, in common with most ebony work of the period, are stated to have been invented by Schwandhardt.

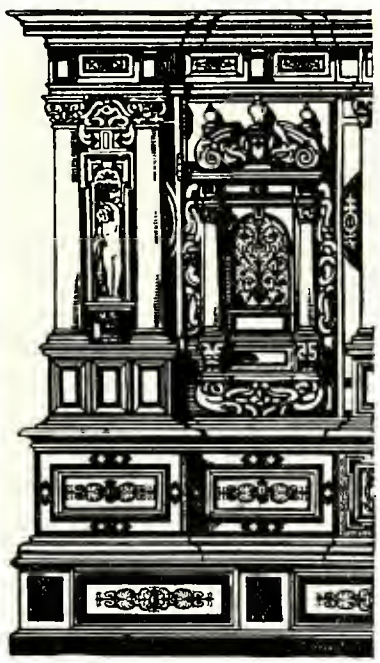
The tapestry is similar to an example at Fontainebleau,—of Louis the Thirteenth period approximately.

Foley

LATE AND ZOPF RENAISSANCE IN GERMANY FROM 1603

DURING the period of the Stuarts and Commonwealth in Great Britain, Germany, absorbed in political complications such as her Thirty Years' War under the rival banners of the Protestant Union and Catholic League, could have had but little real zest for developing the decorative æsthetics of her furniture.

Reference has been made in our previous chapter on the earlier phases of the German Renaissance to the comparative failure of the Germans in welding the Renaissance movement into a coherent or characteristic national style, and it has been suggested that this failure was in a large measure due to a lack of affinity in the Teutonic temperament. Another reason was, however, largely operative, namely, that the new movement reached Germany from largely differing sources: France, Italy, and the Netherlands all taking part in its introduction.



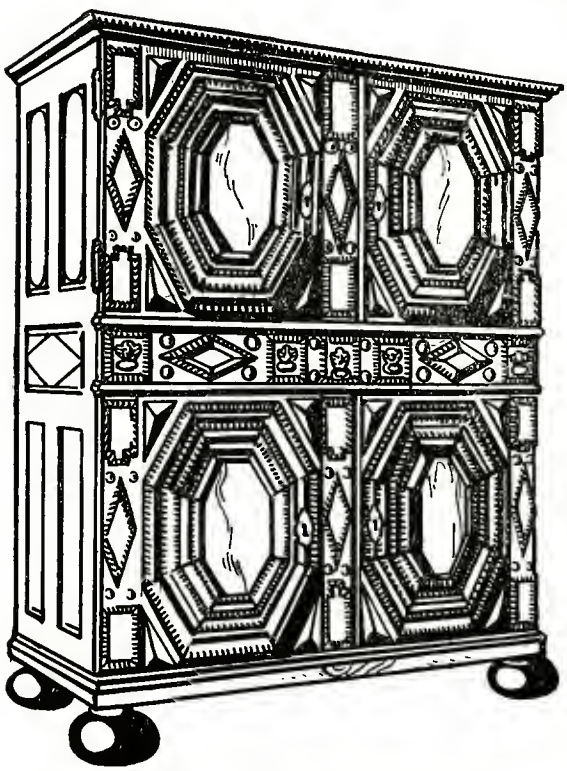
HALF OF INLAID CABINET. GERMAN. SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

Nevertheless, with her usual painstaking, Germany essayed to play her part in the evolution of woodwork design. Her decorative furniture during this period—and indeed until modern days—is undeniably interesting as voicing the national temperament, with its tendency to identify exuberance with richness and minute-

ness with delicacy; its exactitude and its mathematical and scientific rather than artistic conception of applied art.

Did one desire to find other corroboration than that afforded during the last period, of the truth of the writer's conviction that in Gothic rather than in classic modes does the German temperament best express itself, one could scarcely do better than point to the extreme *rococo* phases of German Renaissance, wherein the conscientious Teuton reminds the irreverent of the efforts of a dancing bear to simulate the airs and graces of a French *danseuse*.

The defect is in the design, in the lack of that innate Gallic sense which invests its most wilful applied art caprices with balance and persuasive artistry: not in the craftsmanship. Indeed, at a somewhat later period it will be seen that many great *ebénistes*, whose productions have added honour to the decorative furniture of France, were of German or Flemish extraction; and the work of such men as Baumgartner and Schwandhardt was little if at all inferior to the best work of their successors. Schwandhardt, who died in 1622, is credited with the invention a year or two previously of the undulating ("wave") mouldings which were promptly adopted by French, Flemish, Spanish, and Italian craftsmen, and became an integral feature in ebony furniture of the seventeenth century.



RENAISSANCE CUPBOARD WITH "WAVE" MOULDINGS.
Property of HON. WILLIE JAMES.

At the revocation of the Edict of Nantes so many architects, silversmiths and designers, carvers and makers of decorative furniture,

fled to England and Germany, as well as to Holland, from the *dragonnades*, that the style in which they afterwards worked became known on the Continent as the *Style Réfugié*.

RHENISH CABINET. SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

The decorative cabinetmakers of Germany, later in reception and alien to the Italian spirit in their treatment of Renaissance detail, would seem to have been little behind France in point of time in the florid degeneration equivalent to the *barocco* of Italy. They called to their aid the repoussé worker in gold, silver, and precious stones, at a period when France was content with *pietra dura* and ebony.

Probably no designer influenced more profoundly German woodwork concepts of the Renaissance than did Wendel Dietterlin, whose period of activity was midway between the early German Renaissance and the latter phase.

PAINTED CARVED "LEASH-HOLDER." *Property of* VISCOUNT WOLSELEY.

In matters architectural, until the introduction of the Italian *barocco* modes in the latter half of the seventeenth century, the Germans remained content with their mediæval civil architecture, their delightfully picturesque high roofs with many superimposed dormer windows peeping forth, which one is so pleased to encounter in the older parts of Nuremburg and other old German and Flemish towns.

Indeed, the States roughly composing the present German and Austrian Empires, which until 1648 unitedly formed the bulk of the Holy Roman Empire, appear to have been

as mediæval in most essentials as was France a hundred years earlier, and to have remained, until comparatively modern days, at that respectful distance behind France and Great Britain in the equipments of their towns and homes. Lewes, in his *Life of Goethe*, supplies an instance, when he mentions that "in 1685 the streets of London were first lighted with lamps; in 1775 Germany had not yet ventured on that experiment, a decree at Cassel in that year ordaining that 'in every house as soon as the alarum sounds at night, every inhabitant must hold out a lighted lamp, in order that the people may find their way in the streets.'"

It would be difficult to exaggerate the relatively backward condition of the antagonistic units now composing the German Empire during the latter part of the seventeenth and the whole of the eighteenth centuries. When the French Revolution commenced, Germany, as we know it, was not in existence. Until almost the last quarter of the eighteenth century the "Potsdam Grenadiers" are more typical of the then current German ideals than the Potsdam palace of *Sans Souci*, built by the French sculptor Adam for Frederick the Great, that he might there retire to write to Voltaire and his other French friends, to compose French verses and play the flute.

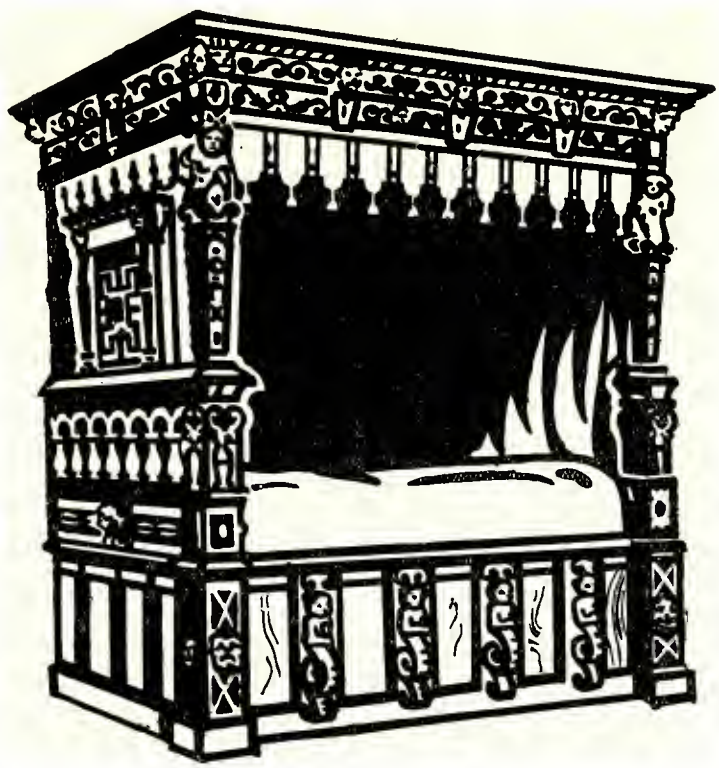
When, about 1770, the *Rococo* or *Zopfstil* in architecture was discontinued in favour of the classical trend, the furniture of the period promptly showed evidence of the change.

The *ueberhangs-schranks* made in Germany during the seventeenth century are of almost identical type to the English court cupboards of early Stuart times: they were usually inlaid. The Germans would appear to have a special fondness for this variety, since it has persisted in popularity ever since, with little if any constructional alteration.

France dominated the constructive and decorative arts in Germany as elsewhere during the eighteenth century. She sent her architects

to build palaces and plan gardens emulative of Versailles, Paris meanwhile acting as a magnet drawing during the eighteenth century all the artistic and technical talent.

The record of German decorative woodwork might have been almost as distinguished as that of France had Oeben, Riesener, Röntgen, Schwerdfeger, Bennemann, and Weisweiler not left Germany to find work, wealth, fame, and protection under Louis xv. and xvi. It is curious to note, however, the contrast presented by the refined forms produced by these great cabinetmakers under French inspiration and for French consumption, with that produced in their native land for home use.



ENCLOSED BEDSTEAD. DATE, GERMAN RENAISSANCE.

One realises the impossibility of compressing three centuries of the history of a nation's development in decorative furniture into a few pages. French influence was, however, so paramount in the design of all continental furniture by 1700, that it has been deemed wiser to devote the bulk of such remaining space as is not needed for our surveys of British styles to depicting the great French modes of the eighteenth century, rather than to attempt a consecutive account of the efforts of the chief continental countries to follow in Gallic footsteps.

PLATE XXXVI

MIRROR, GUERIDONS, AND TABLE OVERLAID WITH SILVER PLAQUES

Presented by the Citizens of London to Charles II. From the ROYAL COLLECTION at WINDSOR CASTLE.
By permission of HIS MAJESTY.

Height of Mirror, 6 ft. 11 in.; width, 4 ft. 2 in.
Height of Gueridons, 3 ft. 4 in.
Height of Table, 2 ft. 4 in.; length, 2 ft. 10 in.; width, 2 ft. 6 in.

THE royal treasures in decorative woodwork at Windsor — for a full account of which Mr. Guy Laking's work should be consulted —contain few more interesting pieces than those forming the subject of our Colour Plate.

Silver furniture, in common with silversmith's work in general, offers such obvious temptation to the needy, that one feels it would be unwise to attempt to gauge the extent of its use from the number of pieces surviving. There is, however, no reason to suppose that the fashion for such ostentatious and extravagant decorative furniture ever reached in England the height which prevailed upon the Continent, and which rendered it necessary to issue ordinances even in Spain, the land of the ingot, to prohibit the manufacture.

Several pieces are, however, to be found in England both in private collections—as at Knole, Ham House, and Penshurst—as well as in His Majesty's collection.

It is probable that the greater part of such expensive equipage was for the personal use of Charles II. and his Court, since nearly all English surviving pieces are of Charles II.'s period. The desire for religious freedom caused many French craftsmen to quit their native land, and establish themselves in England several years before the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. England was thus enriched with Huguenot silversmiths as well as other skilled craftsmen; and it is probable that these earlier emigrants introduced the actual manufacture of silver furniture into England, before

the many fine native silversmiths practised this extension of their manufactures.

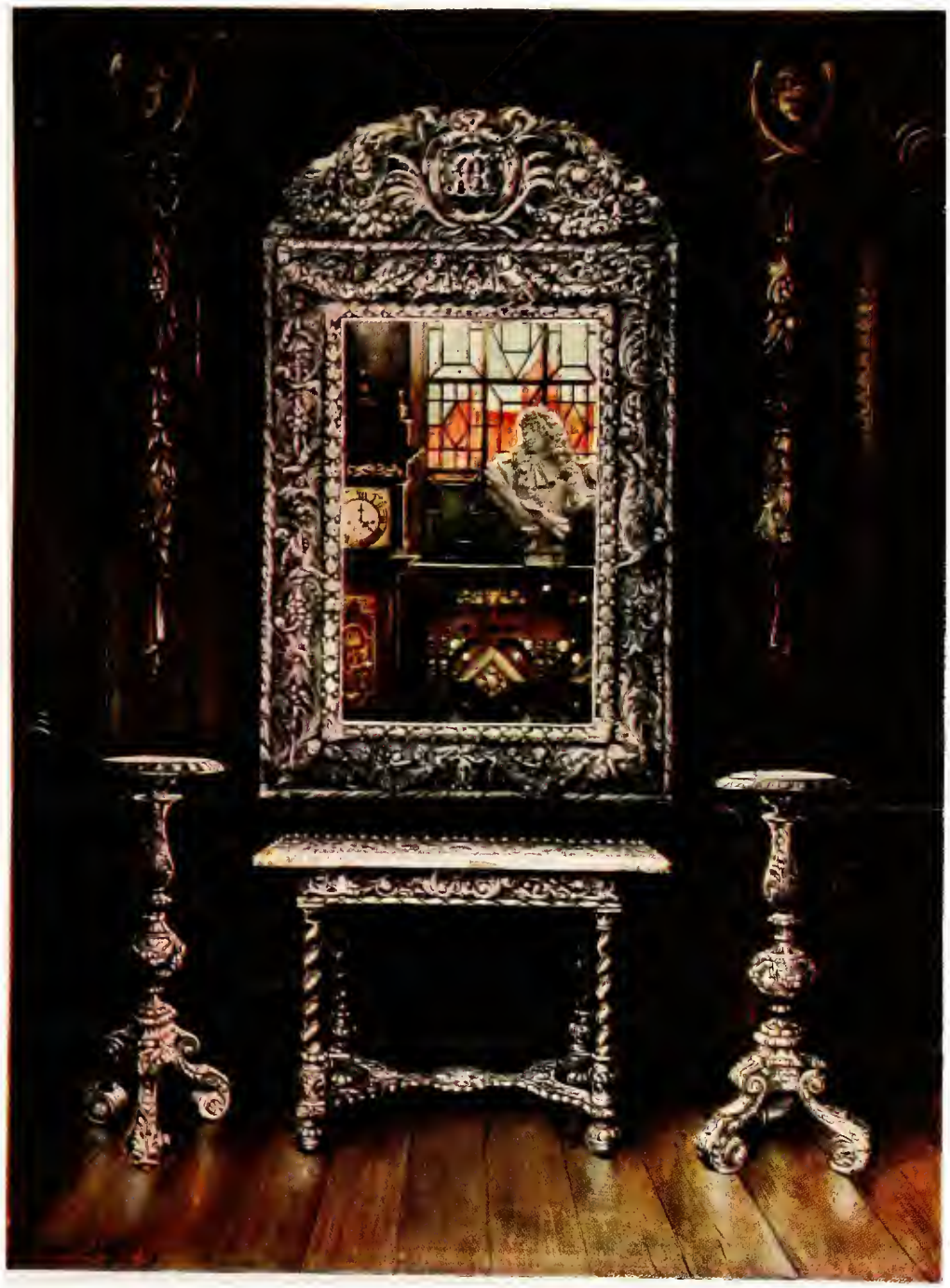
Of ecclesiastical origin, and of Italian, Spanish, and German predilection, the vogue of silver furniture had quickly spread to France. One gathers from contemporary records that Louis de la Querouaille, Louis XIV.'s adept representative, and Charles II.'s abiding mistress, utilised her paramount influence with the king, when she became Duchess of Portsmouth, to foster the vogue of silver furniture. The subsidies which Charles received from Louis XIV., in order that the latter might be free from English interference in his struggle with the Dutch, assisted French ascendancy in decorative tastes as well as in politics.

Evelyn, in the following interesting account of the Duchess of Portsmouth's dressing-room, reveals the degree of luxury which prevailed in the later Stuart Court. "But that which chiefly engaged my curiosity was the rich and splendid furniture of this woman's apartment, now twice or thrice pulled down and rebuilt to satisfy her prodigal and expensive pleasures; while Her Majesty the Queen dos not exceede some gentleman's or ladies' in furniture and accommodation. Here I saw the new fabriq of French tapissry for designe, tendernesse of worke, and incomparable imitations of the best paintings, beyond anything I had ever beheld. . . . Japan cabinets, screens, pendule clocks, greate vases of wrought plate, tables, stands, chimney furniture, sconces, braseras, etc., all of massive silver and out of number, besides some of Her Majesty's best paintings."

The larger pieces of silver furniture are constructed usually of well-seasoned oak, upon which thin plaques or plates of silver are fastened. In the table illustrated these plates are embossed (*repoussé*). The mirror is also *repoussé*, with floral designs of tulips and acanthus, in high relief. In the centre is the cipher of Charles II. under a royal crown, festooned with laurel leaves. The whole is bordered with separate plates of silver, having a running design of acanthus, and small escutcheons with foliated designs at the four angles.

The four spirally-twisted columns of the table have imitation Corinthian capitals and rings of laurel leaf at the base. The acanthus leaf also is employed on the stretcher and the ball feet. There are no hall-marks.

Cabinets, of similar design to that reflected in the mirror, were made from Cromwellian days until the end of Charles II.'s reign, in oak or chestnut. The patterns of the inlays of ebony, mother-o'-pearl, and ivory show strong traces of Oriental feeling.



SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE DECORATIVE FURNITURE FROM 1603

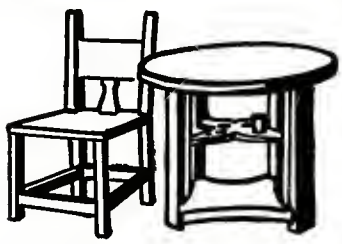
CARVED RENAISSANCE PANEL. SPANISH.

SPAIN, though no longer the chosen and successful champion of her Church against the spreading doctrines of austere Protestantism, was yet the land of riches and the valued banker of the papal power. In the arts at the beginning of the seventeenth century she was preparing to revolt from the insipid uninspired formalism to which the school of Herrara had brought her architecture: a revulsion concluding at the end of the century in *Churrigueresque*, a decorative debauch as weirdly exuberant as its name, that of an architect of Salamanca (1650–1725) who certainly endeavoured to provide an amount of detail in excess of the normal, though it can scarcely be claimed that the ratio of his art is in proportion to the number of syllables contained in the name.

SOTOMAYOR'S CHAIR. SALAMANCA.

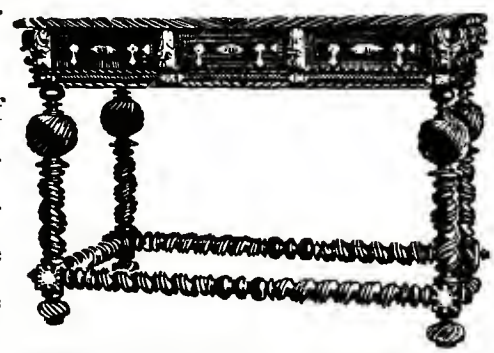
There is reason to believe that even after Philip III. in 1609 wrought lasting injury to his country by his rigorous expulsion of the followers of Mahomet, there were suffered to remain in the little town of Vargas, near Toledo, numbers of industrious Moorish craftsmen, descendants of those who had survived

the previous banishment of their race after the reconquest of Granada: these, or Spanish or German workmen, inspired by their patterns, had made from the latter half of the sixteenth century the *vargueño* cabinet, chest, or coffer of which the Colour Plate No. XXI. illustrates an interesting variety; set up on high by a finely designed turned-work open stand of fortunately almost sacrosanct pattern. Its fall-down, hinged, or sliding flap, shod at the edges—and enriched with minutely pierced metal mounts, lock, and hinge plates—encloses a many-drawered interior, gay with gilding, ivory, or bone columns, supporting Hispano-Moorish arches. The flap when lowered rests bureau-fashion upon sliding supports. Evidence that the *vargueño* was designed to stand against the wall is given by the plain square ending of the stand base.



SPANISH WINE AND CARD TABLE.

Its details are evidently inspired by Saracenic art, and, though shown in the Colour Plate against a plain background, its richly bizarre decorations enable it to bear itself bravely against the gilded painted leathern wall hangings (*guadamacillas*) in whose design and make Spain outshone her Venetian rivals.



SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY PORTUGUESE TABLE. (SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM.)

Toledo was also the birthplace of one, the first volume of whose masterpiece was published at the commencement of this period and speedily became so famous that its chief episodes were favourite subjects for inlays in the ebony, ivory, and tortoiseshell Spanish decorative cabinets—Miguel de Cervantes, the author of *Don Quixote*, whose adventurous life so quietly ended upon the same day as that of our Shakespeare.

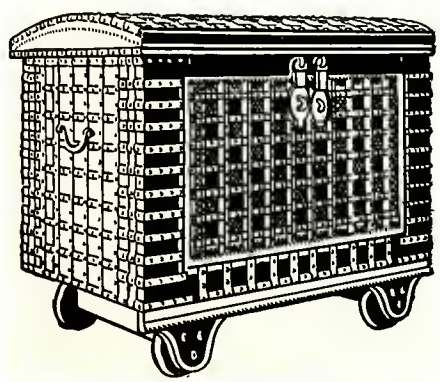
It is possible that the somewhat fantastic Portuguese and Spanish

appliqué metalwork at the beginning of the seventeenth century may have suggested the inlaid marqueterie known as Boulle, after the great French *ébéniste* who is popularly credited with its origin, and who at least recognised first its decorative potentialities.

Both in Spain and Portugal the chestnut chairs which were made in the seventeenth century, were usually of the type illustrated in our sketch of the chair preserved in the Memorial Hall, Philadelphia, at the conclusion of the Colonial Chapter—high-backed and covered with leather decorated with scrolls, birds, figure-work, and large nails or bosses.

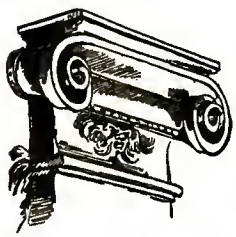
The Portuguese also at this period carried patterns of contemporary Italian chairs to their Indian colony of Goa; they were copied with more or less exactitude by the native craftsmen, who, consciously or unconsciously, gave the details a more Oriental appearance, and exported these copies to Europe. Such suites as that at Penshurst probably originated thus.

So many pieces of decorative furniture were imported into Spain from Flanders, France, and Italy that all examples should be judged on their design, and if, showing no Moresque or other typically Spanish details, allotted to the country whose design characteristics they most resemble.



INDO-PORTUGUESE MARRIAGE CHEST.
(LORD CURZON'S COLLECTION.)

ITALIAN DECORATIVE FURNITURE FROM 1603

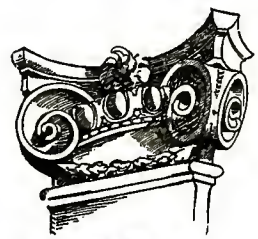


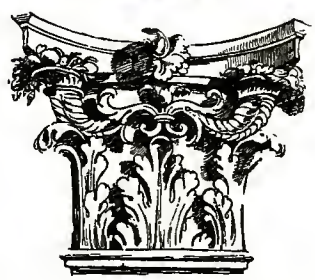
DECORATIVE art in Italy has been so continuous and many-sided that at scarcely any period has the æsthetic fire been quenched; therefore, though we have to confess that the Italian Renais-

CARTOUCHE BY MITELLI.

sance attained its most refined phases during the sixteenth century, yet there is so much of beauty and interest in Italian seventeenth-century decorative furniture that one needs constant assurance of the awful proximity of the baroque, which

FACSIMILE SKETCHES FOR CAPITALS AND MASKS BY MITELLI.





FACSIMILE SKETCHES FOR CAPITALS AND MASKS BY MITELLI.

spread its florid blight over that generator of the arts, Architecture, to feel seriously the artistic decadence.

Indeed, although Michael Angelo, Bernini, and Borromini were the inspirers of the *rococo*, the Renaissance designers were much less affected than is usually assumed, by the sinuous phase, preferring the severe and somewhat cold classic.

The craftsmen of the Italian Renaissance obtained their constructional details from the classic temples, *sarcophagi*, and triumphal arches of ancient Rome. Their cabinets were elaborately fitted with drawers and cupboards faced with columns, arcaded and otherwise wearing the semblance of architectural structures in miniature. Towards the conclusion of the sixteenth century, ebony took precedence among the woods used for decorative furniture.

EBONY CABINET. IVORY INLAYS. ITALIAN. SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

From the middle of the sixteenth century Venice had been prominent in the evolution of the useful but comparatively lowly *cassone* into the luxurious high cabinet or *stipi*. The non-European origin of the materials used in the inlaying of these cabinets supports the contention that the Venetians were indebted in some measure to their intercourse with more Eastern peoples, whose craftsmen they encouraged to settle in Venice, and that Venetian art was also affected by the gorgeous fabrics imported from Arabia and other parts of the East by its merchants. Such an origin is at least more probable than that the Adriatic republic was indebted to the Spaniards for the first forms; indeed, the *vargueño*, that peculiarly

and almost sole Spanish cabinet is an evident blend of Hispano-Moorish details, and probably of somewhat later date. The Spanish and Venetian cabinets were also dissimilar in treatment, and, in the writer's opinion, independently developed.

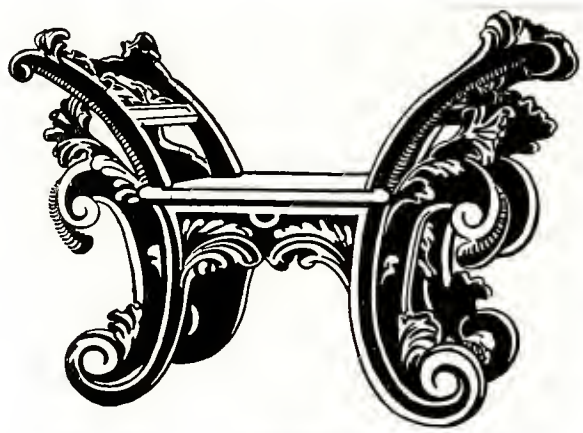
Certain it is that the Italian artificers of Milan, Venice, Florence, and other cities were especially famed throughout this first half of the seventeenth century for the sumptuous adornment of their decorative furniture. Their inlays, which towards the end of the previous period were chiefly of wood or stones, were now supplemented with ivory, mother-o'-pearl, and at a later stage tortoiseshell; whilst metals, gilded and damascened (*i.e.* inlaid with patterns of gold and silver), further added to the decorative resources of the woodwork designer, and by their opulence lured him to over-elaboration. In this latter trend of the *baroque* (so called from the Portuguese *barocco*, a term given for pearls of irregular shape), wood was little in evidence, save as a framework for the setting of mosaic or *pietra dura*.

ITALIAN CHAIR. OLD COLNE PRIORY.

Almost as typical of the Italian work of this period, as of the previous century, are the carved walnut wood chairs of the type shown on page 121, practically formed of four pieces of solid wood. It was in these chairs that the *barocco* made its decadent appearance first, as they were entirely dependent upon the carver, whose work, unrestrained by the cabinetmaker's straight lines, grew more and more florid and riotous. The large carved and gilt lanterns, whether used upon the gondola, in the house, or the church, are peculiarly Venetian features.

Much as one would like to dwell upon later phases of the history of beautiful woodwork in Italy, one cannot disregard the fact that Italy—from the middle of the sixteeenth century at latest—no longer held undisputed supremacy in the arts of decorative furnishing. To France henceforth, if precedence be allotted, must it be given: the

story of beautiful woodwork upon the Continent has therefore mainly been continued in our surveys of French mobiliary work from the days of Henri Quatre and Louis Treize.



ITALIAN SEAT. LATE RENAISSANCE. ARUNDEL CASTLE.

PLATE XXXVII

CHIMNEYPIECE IN COLOURED MOSAIC. FLORENTINE

VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, SOUTH KENSINGTON

Length of shelf, 10 ft. 7½ in.; depth of shelf, 1 ft. 2 in.; height of shelf, 6 ft. 4 in.; total height, 9 ft. 8½ in. *Circa* 1600

TABLE IN COLOURED MOSAIC. FLORENTINE

VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, SOUTH KENSINGTON

Length over top, 4 ft. 7½ in.; height over top, 2 ft. 9 in. *Circa* 1575

AMONG the earliest known applications of ornament to furniture are the "jewellings" of *lapis lazuli* and glass inset into ivory (with a thin wall or *cloison* of the ivory between) upon the thrones and other woodwork from Nineveh, and usually representing deities, the lotus and *papyri*. The Greeks also delighted in mosaic work; indeed, from ancient days until modern times, mosaic work has been more or less used, especially upon the Italian peninsula.

The art of mosaic consists of the formation of patterns by means of many—usually small—pieces of stone, glass, wood or other material. In practice the term is usually restricted to materials other than wood, such work when in wood being generally termed parquet, if applied to the floor, and intarsia or marqueterie when used for the decoration of the wall, or upon pieces of furniture. Pliny, it will be remembered, refers in some detail to inlaying and veneering.

The two principal methods of marble mosaic are Roman and Florentine. The pattern is produced in the Roman by closely

setting numerous minute pieces, so that the junctions are scarcely discernible, whilst in the production of the brilliant sectile mosaic in which the Florentines were especially adept during the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, the pieces are larger, and are each shaped to the curves of the design.

Out of this flat-surfaced mosaic grew also the characteristic Italian enrichment of furniture by raised work in which marbles, agates, and other choice stones were disposed in vase and flower forms.

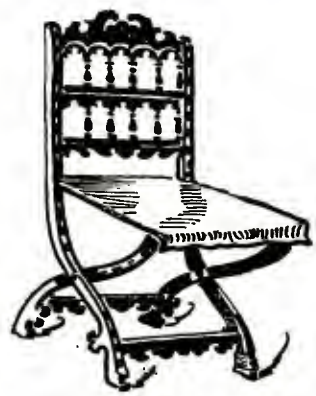
The chimneypiece illustrated was purchased by the South Kensington authorities in 1870, for £350. It is constructed of white marble, with the exception of the cornice, shelf, and plinth, which are of green marble. Many quarries are represented in the polychromatic renderings of satyrs, griffins, masks, flowers, fruit, shields, and other typical Renaissance details which, with the original owner's arms ensigned with a coronet, compose the ornament. One cannot add "children and other wild beasts" to the description, after the fashion of the description of Horace Walpole's *pietra dura* cabinet at Strawberry Hill.

The *chenet* or firedogs of wrought iron are also typical of Italian design (being similar to a pattern in the Parnham collection), although possibly on account of their name there seems a tendency to attribute such pieces to French craftsmen.

Despite the somewhat heavy appearance of its top—incidental to many single-pillar tables—the octagonal table is an equally interesting and masterly example of Florentine artistry in stone.

DECORATIVE FURNITURE OF THE NETHERLANDS—HOLLAND AND FLANDERS, FROM 1603

THE opening years of James the First's reign witnessed not only Spain's acknowledgment of the independence of the more Protestant and teutonic Holland northern provinces, forming part of her Netherlands kingdom, but Dutch supremacy upon the seas. At the end of the long and desperate struggle Holland generally, and Amsterdam in particular, became the asylum of religious liberty against Spanish oppression, the practice of all creeds being permitted.



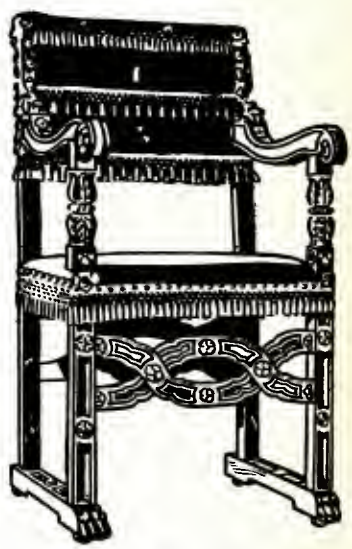
FOLDING CHAIR. FLEMISH. SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

Freedom-loving foreigners, skilful workers in textiles, tapestry, satin and brocades, carvers, cabinetmakers and inlayers, gold and silver smiths, flocked to Holland, filling the towns to overflowing, and contributing even more to her prosperity than did the refugees after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. They utilised their maritime power to carry on a flourishing trade with the Indies. The Dutch East India Company was founded at the commencement of the seventeenth century, and had thoroughly established itself in the East before our own East India Company, to whom a charter had been granted in 1600, seriously attempted to challenge their supremacy. In the intervals of peace with the Spanish peninsula the thrifty Hollander imported the cane furniture, which after Charles the Second's accession became so

popular in England. The Dutch indeed reached during Stuart days—despite the usual religious dissensions and wars—the apex of their commercial power, exporting large quantities of decorative furniture to England, receiving raw material in exchange, and becoming the chief factors between the principal nations of Europe and the East.

FLEMISH RENAISSANCE CHAIR. PARNHAM COLLECTION.

The leather-covered, nail-studded "Flemish" or "Cromwell" chairs were among their merchandise; Flanders chests, too, maintained their popularity during the earlier part of the seventeenth century; the description, however, was often applied in England to chests which had never crossed the seas. One grasps better the necessity for such safe storage receptacles when remembering that, until the days of the first Stuarts, bills of exchange were not used in England, and actual coin was paid and received in every financial transaction; and that the Dutch, when they founded in 1609 their Bank of Amsterdam, established the first state bank in Europe,—the Bank of England not being founded until 1693.



RENAISSANCE UPHOLSTERED CHAIR. FLEMISH. MUSÉE DU LOUVRE.

England did not, during the seventeenth century, justify her future designation of a nation of shopkeepers: the term may well be given to the Hollander at this period. The early settlers in the New World were soon his customers—both his brethren of New Holland and, in a much lesser degree, the English colonists, after the latter had become sufficiently settled and wealthy for such European luxuries.

The establishment of Dutch trade with the East brought elements into the decorative furniture of Holland from which other provinces

of the no-longer-united Netherlands were free, and fostered the expression in the arts of each, of the temperamental differences between the Flemings and Hollanders.

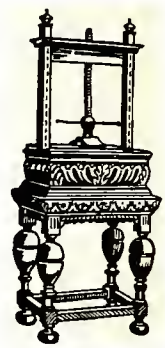
The Dutch command of the seas enabled them to safely return laden with tropical products, such as ivory, tortoiseshell, mother-o'-pearl, ebony, and other rare foreign materials likely to commend themselves to their cabinetmakers. Among their imports also were tropical birds, and it was not long before representations of these were introduced into the inlays.

LAC. ORIENTAL AND EUROPEAN

Prominent among the Eastern products carried in Dutch bottoms at the period were the boxes, panels, chests, and other lacquered work of Japan and China. Nor were Dutch activities in this direction confined to importing. Perceiving that European appreciation of this, the most beautiful of the Oriental decorative arts, could be exploited more lucratively, they appear not only to have forwarded furniture to the East for decoration—the evidence upon this point is not so clear as one wishes; but also to have imported Oriental lacquer workers to Amsterdam to practise the art and teach its mysteries to the native Hollanders. There is ground for suspicion that much lacquering, paid for and regarded by English cabinetmakers and owners at the time as Japanese or Chinese, went no further upon its voyage to the East than Amsterdam. Indeed, one may divide the origins of decorative lacquer furniture into three classes: (1) That of Eastern manufacture and design throughout; (2) that of European manufacture and design, imitating Eastern ornament; (3) that of European design and manufacture as regards its construction, and of Eastern lacquering.

Although, after the acquisition of Bombay by the marriage of Charles II. to the Infanta Catherine, sister of the King of Portugal,

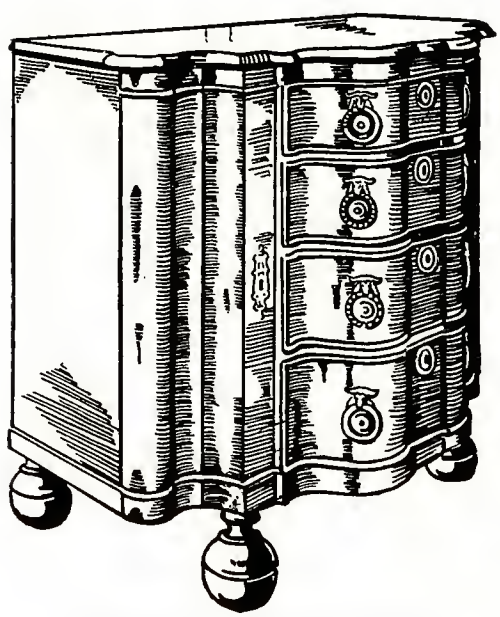
the English increased their imports of lacquer, the greater part of the commerce in decorative lacquer—imported and of European imitation thereof—work remained in the hands of Holland until at least the days of George the First.



FLEMISH OAK PRESS. PARNHAM COLLECTION.

Indirect evidence of the exportation of English-made pieces abroad for lacquering is afforded by lacquered frames, such as that enclosing the needlework-panelled mirror in the Pruyn Collection at Albany, U.S.A., and the similar example in the South Wilts Museum at Salisbury. Both were evidently specially made for the purpose, and their apparent date precludes the probability of their being of English lacquering.

The domestic equipments of a nation being almost invariably an index to the character and condition of its owners, one is not surprised to note that Dutch furniture gradually became heavier and aimed more at solidity and comfort than did that of the French from the middle of the seventeenth century. It must be confessed by even the most ardent admirer of Dutch furniture, that the *kas* and other enclosed pieces tended towards the heaviness typical of a race deviating so seldom from the stolid that one reads with amazement of the "tulipomania," which beset them in 1636 strongly enough to leave its mark upon the details of their decorative furniture.



SHAPED WALNUT COMMODE. DUTCH.

The artists and craftsmen of the Netherlands, whether Dutch or Flemings, were as renowned masters of their craft during Stuart days as their ancestors, contemporaries of the Tudor era, had been; the fame of Goler, a Dutch cabinetmaker in

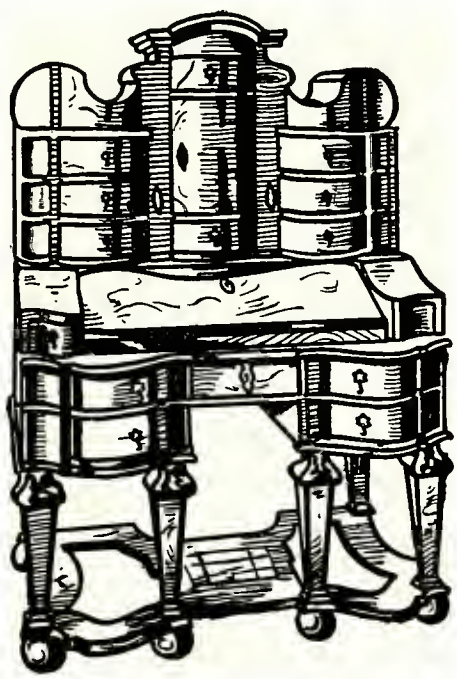
the service of Mazarin, has been handed down to posterity as an expert in the *ebéniste's* art, together with Lucas Faydherbe, the carver-architect, one of whose masterpieces in boxwood is in the National Collection.

CRISPIN VAN DEN PASSE,

whose book, *Boutique Menuiserie*, published probably in 1642, was probably much resorted to by woodwork craftsmen, and the last of the De Vries, were natives of Flanders, though they practised their craft in France; whilst the very name of the Verbruggens, who are associated with Venetian work, betrays their Netherlands ancestry.

Dutch furniture from the entry of the style of William the Third's great antagonist Louis Quatorze shows less independence in a decorative sense: a love of convex curves and rotundity is discernible—endorsing the cynic theory that æsthetic predilections are influenced by the looking-glass. Many Bombé pieces certainly have quite a burgomaster air.

It seems conclusive to the writer that Flanders and Holland followed closely behind Venice, and preceded France, in the making of the sombre inlaid ebony work which we have noted as characteristic of the Italian mobiliary styles and the Gallic modes of Henri Quatre and Louis Treize. Towards the end of the latter reign the Dutch appear to have made metal and red shell marqueterie, in crude anticipation of Boulle's methods.



WALNUT INLAID BUREAU. FLEMISH. LATE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

Holland and the more Celtic and Catholic Flanders — whose boundaries

were practically identical with those of Belgium of the present day until the advent of Louis XIV.—had been the equals or leaders of France in the evolution of mobiliary modes. Both became imitators of the contemporary styles of Louis XIV., XV., and XVI. In Holland the individuality of the people still impressed itself upon their styles; but in Flanders, owing perhaps in part to greater affinity, and in part to political causes, more literal methods prevailed.

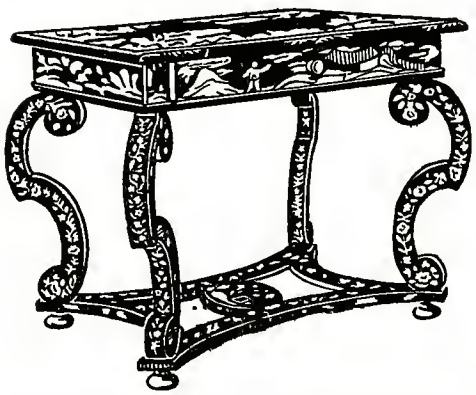
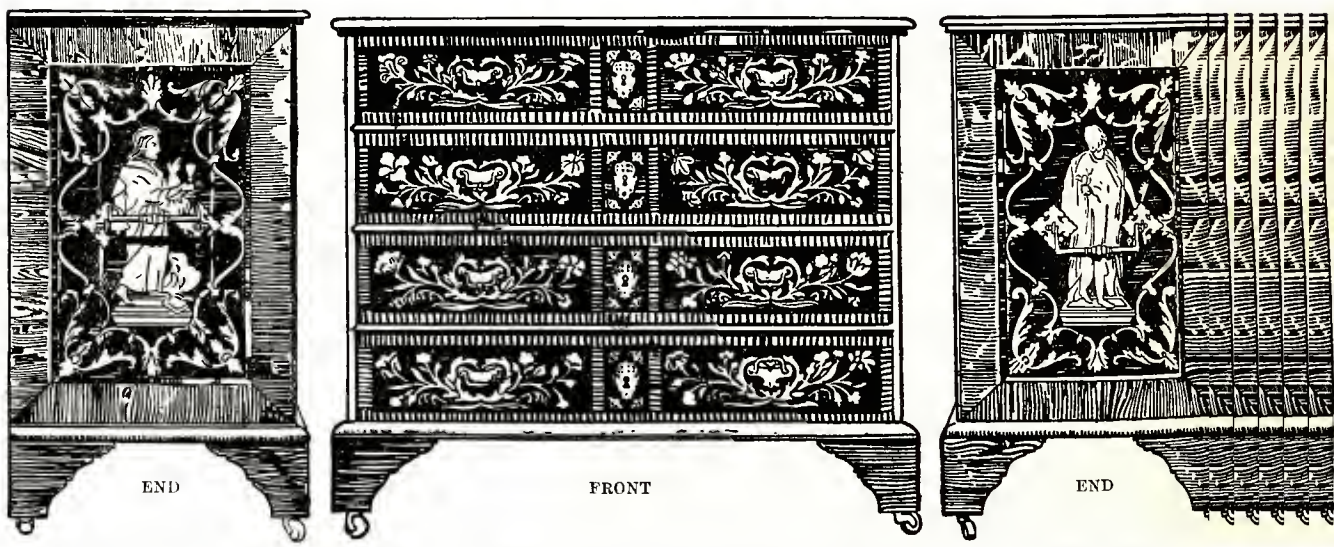


TABLE PAINTED WITH SEMI-CHINESE DETAIL DECORATION. *Property of* THE EARL OF PEMBROKE.

The pre-eminence of the Netherlands in oil painting, due in large measure to the Van Eycks' introduction of the modern method, was utilised by its great painters to depict scenes of home life. Indeed, no nation has been more fortunate in this respect; the canvases of Teniers, Maes, Metsu, Jan Steen, Gerard Terburg, and others being trustworthy chronicles of contemporary home equipments.

Our narrative of the mobiliary modes prevailing in England during



WALNUT CHEST INLAID WITH IVORY, MALACHITE, PEARL, HOLLY, AND OTHER WOODS. CABINET WORK ENGLISH. INLAY PROBABLY FLEMISH OR ITALIAN. *Property of* MRS. M. E. BLOOM.

the reign of William and Mary is virtually an account of Dutch decorative furniture; whilst from the commencement of the eighteenth century the woodwork modes of Holland follow more or less frankly—and at a respectful distance both as regards time and technique—the modes of France. Midway in the century, too, painted work became in vogue, and the methods of Martin were adopted, with an important difference in the choice of subjects,—ships, horses, and political personages taking the place of the more allegorical and pastoral French *motifs*. Occasionally heavy renderings of Chippendale or Heppelwhite are found in Dutch decorative furniture towards the end of the century.

In North Holland, however, decorative furniture has largely retained the simplicity and quaintness reminiscent of continental peasant furniture, the marriage chests, tables, chairs, and other household goods being of traditional forms and brightly painted in red and green.

PLATE XXXVIII

CARVED WALNUT BOMBÉ ARMOIRE WITH CHASED MOUNTS

Property of Dr. Burghard
Carved Oak Stairway, Guildford

Length, 6 ft. 9 in.; height, 8 ft. 3 in.; depth, 2 ft. 4 in.

Though during the reigns of Charles II. and James II., French influence was paramount, towards the end of the reign of the first-named monarch many Dutch craftsmen, in shrewd anticipation of the ensuing political, social, and artistic ascendancy of their land (upon William and Mary's accession), emigrated to Ipswich, Norwich, and other parts of East Anglia as well as to southern England. They were employed to transplant the style then current in Holland, to various localities, and in their interior work were little affected by English contemporary tastes. Guildford, in particular, owes much of its picturesqueness to these workers, who were also engaged at Sutton Place and Farnham, in the same county.

The stairway shown is identical in detail with that erected in one of these houses, and is evidently of Dutch lineage, much resembling the well-known stairs in Brewer's Hall, Antwerp, although devoid of the cherubs' heads, cupids, and fauna which add to the richness of the Antwerp example. The date of the stairway is probably between 1675 and 1690.

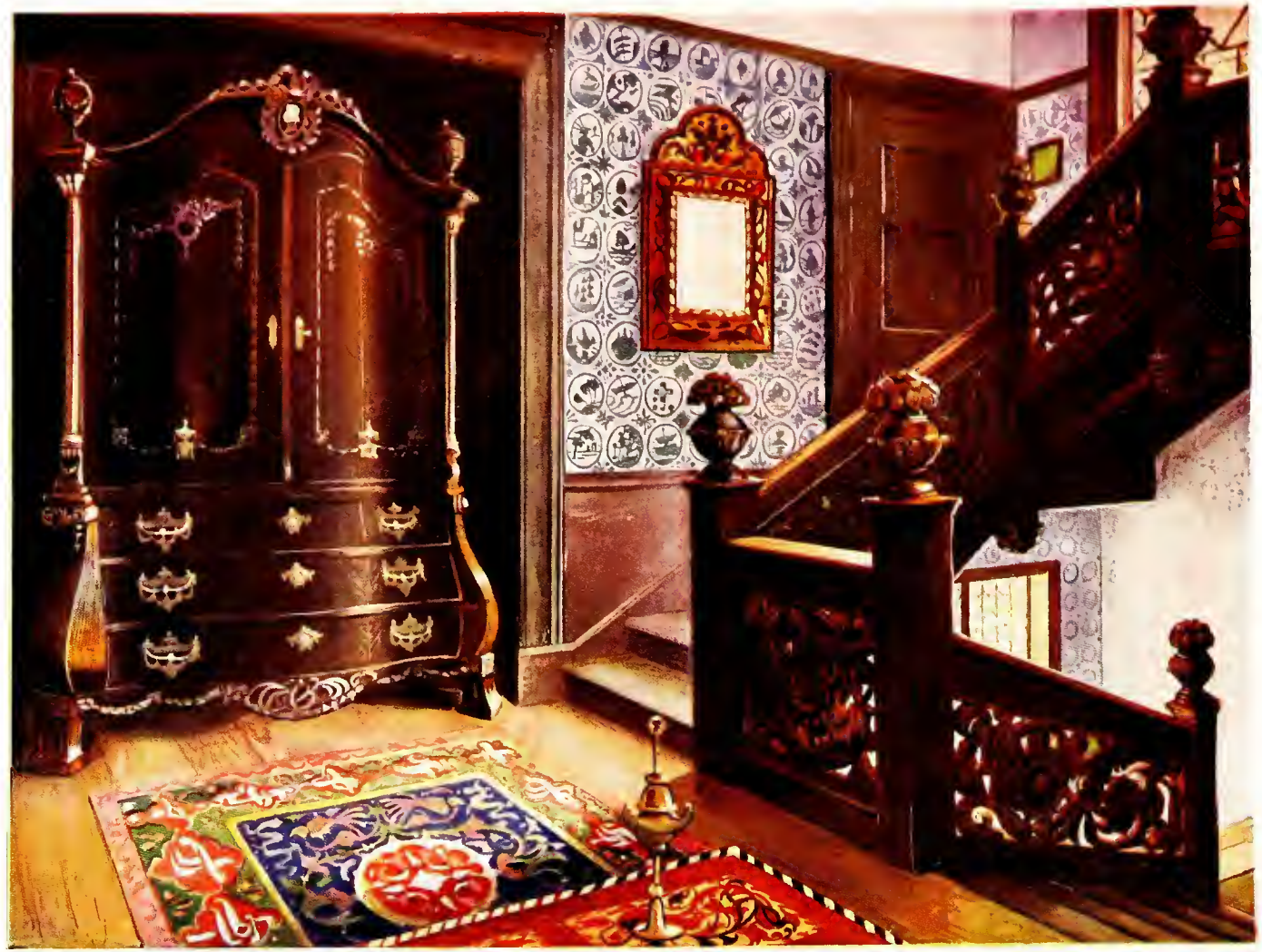
Many picturesque evidences yet remain in the semi-obsolete little trading ports which dot the southern and eastern coasts of England, of the brisk trade and intercourse which in the Stuart days of light tonnage was carried on with the Netherlands: at Topsham, on the Exe

estuary, for instance, several of the houses are faced with the small bricks of Antwerp, whilst old Dutch blue tiles decorate some of the interior walls.

Dutch also in design and workmanship is the armoire or wardrobe from Dr. Burghard's collection, being a Hollander's rendering of Louis XIV., and probably a few years later in point of time, verging as it does upon the Regency phase of the Louis XV. style. In the evolution of the *armoire* into the wardrobe (*Garde robe*) upon the Continent, during the seventeenth century, the Dutch appear to have been the leaders: their stolid love of comfort and affinities towards rotund amplitude finding expression in *bombé* (*bomber*, "to swell," "to bulge") pieces such as that shown.

Coincident with the first inflow of the Dutch invasion in matters of taste, was the revival in England of a desire for marqueterie: such designs as the mirror shown, from an example of this period, evidence the trend towards the Dutch marqueterie modes.

Woollen carpets enriched with gold and silver thread, and of pattern and colouring such as that shown (from the Salting Collection), were manufactured in Persia from as early as the sixteenth century, and were imported into Europe by the Dutch, and other traders, not only for use as floor coverings, but for wall hangings.



THE LOUIS XIV. PERIOD OF FRENCH DECORATIVE FURNITURE—1643-1715

"When life was wholly operatic."—TAINE

SKETCH FOR CAPITAL BY JEAN BERAIN.

WE now reach the long reign of the first of the two French kings who, for more than a century, sowed the seeds of national discontent, reaped in the swelter of revolution by their feeble but comparatively innocent successor.

SKETCH FOR CAPITAL BY JEAN BERAIN.

The adulatory title of the "Gift of God" bestowed upon Louis XIV. by his subjects is now applied only in irony; and the humble historian of fine furniture is thankful that upon him is cast no onus of dwelling at length upon the darker sides of eighteenth-century France. Yet were "the Louis'" on trial, a jury of designers, art craftsmen, and connoisseurs in the applied arts would be their most lenient judges. Such a jury would indeed be incapable of unbiassed verdict, for decorative woodwork, in common with all or nearly all the applied arts, has cause for gratitude towards Louis XIV., XV., and XVI., whose continuation of the policy of Henri Quatre, Richelieu, and Louis Treize gave such a rich crop of woodwork masterpieces to the world.

SKETCH FOR CAPITAL BY JEAN BERAIN.

Could one evoke an adequate vision of the men famous and frivolous, the women fair and frail, who peopled the court of *Le Roi Magnifique* in the days of his zenith; could one see them again in the

parts they played during those days, what mixed emotions would be summoned by the pompous ostentation of the gorgeous spectacles presented! It is to be feared that, however much the ubiquitous social reformer might condemn, his reflections would be but a weak and ill-appreciated aftermath to the feast of fashion, form, and colour presented by the courtiers airing their costumes, wigs, canes, shoes, cravats, and fine manners, against a background of glistening marbles, mirrors, and the ebony, silver, gold, and tortoiseshell of the *meubles de luxe.*

VERSAILLES

There could be but one stage for such a scenic revival: Versailles, the most lasting memorial of Louis XIV.'s energies and ideals, with its magnificent palace and gardens, whose immensity in design was equalled by such furious endeavours under the younger Mansart to complete its speedy transformation from a royal hunting box, that, in 1684, 6000 horses and 22,000 men were employed. In 1685 the number of the latter had been increased to 35,000, who plied their trade winter and summer; while, partly on account of insanitary conditions, partly on account of the marshy ground, fever continuously raged among them. "Prodigious cartloads of dead are taken away every night as from the Hôtel Dieu," writes Madame de Sevigué.

FAUTEUIL. VERSAILLES. LOUIS XIV.

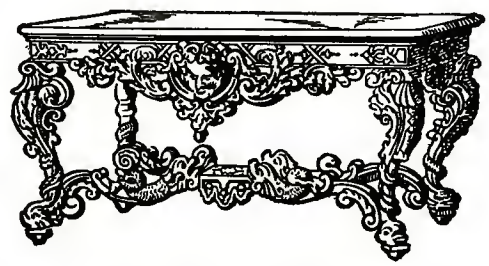
Were the human butterflies who flitted through the artificial Arcadian glades and scenes of Versailles incommoded by reflections upon, or visions of, these uncourtly workers, virtually slaughtered for the speedier gratification of their king's colossal egotism?

The building of Versailles was reared by its builders in a manner

so reminiscent of the Arabian Nights, and was so uniquely significant a revelation of Louis Quatorze, the man and the style, that even slight glimpses of its fascinating history will help us to understand the period.

Jules Hardouin Mansart, the architect, estimated the cost of the work he designed for Louis XIV. at Versailles at 153,000,000 livres for the architectural shell alone. Equally enormous were the sums lavished upon the superb gardens.

Louis XIV., who loved the open air,—one of his few inexpensive tastes,—gave to the artist Le Nôtre not only the task of making the marshy wilderness around his palace "blossom as the rose," but the disposition of its verdure and flower-beds, its running waters, its statues of nymphs, bronze vases, and marble colonnades. The stairways by which these open-air virtual drawing-rooms were reached were of such noble width that fifty of Louis' Court beauties, wearing each hooped skirts some twenty-five feet round, could climb them *en masse* without fear of loss of dignity from collision, even when surrounded by a bevy of courtiers.



CARVED GILT TABLE. VERSAILLES. LATE LOUIS XIV.

Probably exclusive of *hôtels* for the court functionaries, and the suites of buildings called "louises" at the disposal of the king for lodging his favourites, the stables alone cost upwards of 3,000,000 francs, and were so magnificent as to serve for circus, ballroom, and theatre; within them some 200 vehicles and 2000 horses were kept for His Majesty's use, with an army of coachmen, footmen, and valets whose liveries cost half a million a year. To comb the king's wig, to watch and wash his dogs, to hand him each an article of his dress —and to stand in a corner of the room whose appearance desiderated a human ornament!—for such services as these Louis required 200 attendants. After which one learns without surprise that the

furnishings of Versailles cost some 13,000,000 livres, exclusive of the pictures and tapestries.

Just as the gridiron-planned Spanish Palace of the Escorial is a memorial of the gloomy bigotry of its builder Philip II., so is the Palace of Versailles typical of the ordered pomp and uncurbed æsthetic tastes of the Sun King, who must in its inception have veritably thought himself the centre or sun of France, if not of the universe, around which all men and things perforce revolved.

THE ROYAL WORKSHOPS

The splendid conception of state policy whereby the development of the national art-crafts was promoted by means of workshops in the Louvre, conceived as we have seen by *Henri Quatre* and continued by Richelieu in Louis Treize days, was endorsed by Mazarin and Colbert in Louis XIV.'s reign. Both ministers added many Italians to the Flemings who had been appointed. In the days of Henri Quatre the foreign craftsmen in the Louvre had to be protected against popular dislike; this, however, subsided, and the commingling of differing national temperaments was doubtless fruitful in influencing the styles of Louis Quatorze and his successors.

In more than one respect the reign of Louis XIV. marks a new era in the history of furniture styles and their designers. In 1664, Colbert, Louis' Minister of Finance, founded the French Royal Academy of Arts, into which designs of decorative furniture were admitted. By the institution of the royal workshops and the Academie, France regarded and rewarded officially the maker of fine decorative furniture —*meubles de luxe*—as an artist, in his own way coequal with the sculptor and the painter. The example might with advantage be imitated by modern Royal Academies of other lands than France, were it only in frank recognition of the indebtedness of the average modern picture to the frame enshrining it.

PLATE XXXIX

INLAID JEWEL CASKET OF WALNUT WOOD. PANELLED FRONT SIDES AND TOP

In the Wallace Collection, Hertford House

Length, 2 ft. 0½ in.; height, 14 in.; depth, 11½ in.

An inscription in French upon the oval *cartouche* in the centre of the base, informs us that this masterpiece of inlaid woodwork was "made at Massevaux by Jean Conrad Tornier; Arquebus mounter in 1630." It is therefore of French origin in a strictly geographical sense;—the little town of Massevaux being close to Belfort, Haut Rhin, on the German border. Its details are, however, typical of the delicate German ornamentation in ivory such as may be seen upon arquebus stocks of the period, in the same collection. In the early days of firearms, ere sternly militant utilitarianism governed their construction, the arquebus mounter was an art-craftsman deservedly held in high esteem.

Each panel is decorated upon a structure of scrolls, with somewhat formally-arranged groups of fruit, flowers, birds, dolphins and *cornucopiæ*. The inlays are of engraved and stained green stag's horns and mother-o'-pearl. The corners of the panel framing are further enriched with brass scrollwork. The marqueterie upon the panelled top is of equally delicate detail.

Edwin Foley '09

BERNINI

The *Percy Anecdotes* relate an instance of the favour which Louis XIV., autocrat and despot though he was, showed towards those eminent in the arts. "When Louis XIV. invited Bernini to France he was received with public honours, the Papal Nuncio meeting him to conduct him to a royal palace; during his stay of eight months he received eight *louis d'or* per day, and at his departure a present of fifty thousand crowns. Yet though expressly sent for to assist in building the Louvre, when Louis showed him Perrault's design he had the liberality to remark that France needed no foreign aid when she possessed so much genius in herself."

COLBERT

Colbert selected the architects, designers, and other artists for the furniture at Fontainebleau, the Tuileries, and the Louvre. He appears to have made it a canon in his political economy to encourage the artist's thesis that everything in common use could and should be made beautiful. It was also part of his policy to protect the arts, the crafts, and the craftsmen of France, from the competition of other lands.

The state workshops of the world-famed Gobelins tapestries, started in the reign of Henri Quatre, were extended and utilised by Louis XIV. as royal manufactories for Crown furniture. They were financed by Colbert and directed by Le Brun—a pupil, with Mignard, of Simon Vouet of Louis Treize days.

LE BRUN

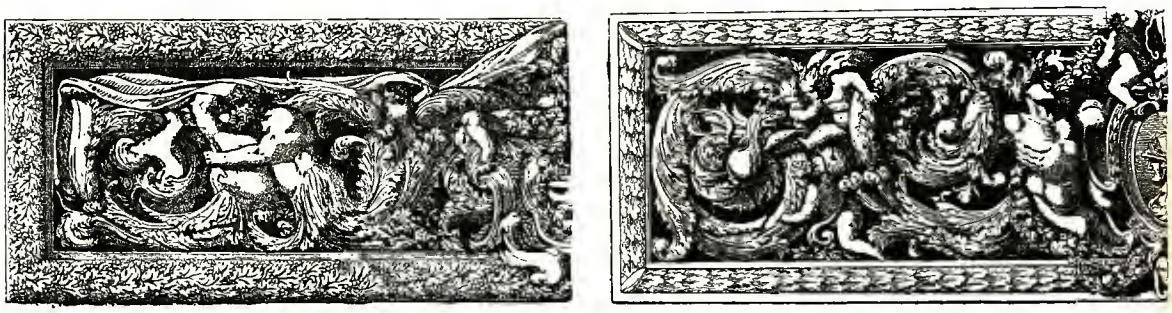
Le Brun, who was a rare combination of painter, decorative designer, and man of business, exercised vast influence over all the

art industries for more than a quarter of a century; himself designing or decreeing the designs for cabinetwork, textiles, and metalwork. His plates of drawings were published from 1672. He was succeeded by Mignard.

Second only to Mansart and Le Brun in evolving the style Louis Quatorze, were

THE LE PAUTRES AND BERAIN

The Le Pautres favoured Roman and martial emblems. Shields, cuirasses, and plumed casques dominate their compositions. Succeeding Le Pautre came Berain's less vigorous but better balanced ornament,



FACSIMILE DESIGNS, HALVES OF FRIEZE PANELS. JEAN LE PAUTRE.

with its soupçon of fantastic shapes heralding the transition towards the style known as *Régence.* Among the masters of ornament were Cucci the sculptor—*ciseleur*, Marot, Blondel Senior, and others whose name and periods will be found in our chart of woodwork styles, and the even fuller list of French designers of Louis Fourteenth, Fifteenth, and Sixteenth periods, appended to the chapter on Louis XV. modes in woodwork.

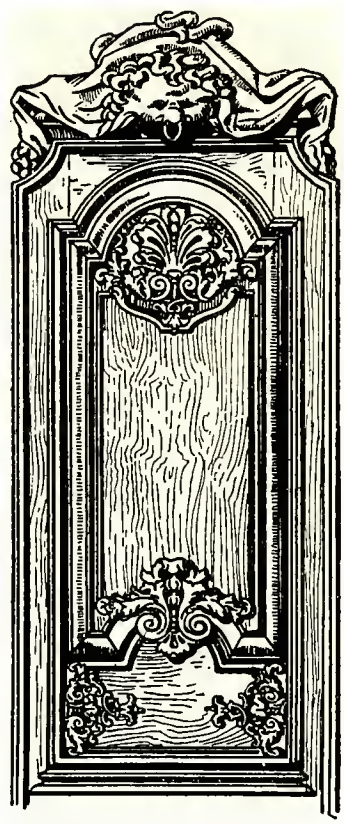
ELEMENTS OF THE STYLE

The elements of the style Louis Quatorze, produced by these men, are chiefly classic in source. Le Brun's use at Versailles of the human mask, the sun, and the lion's skin is especially notable.

Mouldings were of dead or burnished gold, usually enriched and wide, conveying a feeling of strength and breadth. The swelling curve of the bold torus was carved in high relief with ornament, either directly classic in inspiration, or Renaissance, as interpreted in Flanders and Italy, composed of guilloches, scrolls, boughs, shells, flowers, mascarons, cartouches, with acanthus and laurel leafage.

Trellis-work formed by bars usually diagonal and closely interlaced, the spaces between being filled with *paterœ*, was also an important element, whilst the royal cipher, the double L forming the central ornament upon a turquoise-blue ground, in Colour Plate No. XLI., was inset in a true oval during Louis the Fourteenth's days, as distinct from the egg-shape used in the Louis the Sixteenth period.

Acanthus leafage was rendered with much more breadth than during the preceding days of Louis Treize.



DOOR PANEL. HOTEL MAZARIN. SURMOUNTED BY LION'S SKIN.

LA CHINOISERIE

Our Sir William Chambers, Chippendale, and their school had no monopoly or precedence in their fondness for the Chinese style; for—half a century earlier—in the days of Louis XIV. we find the love of *la chinoiserie* expressing itself in the decorative furniture of more than one of the chief *ebénistes*.

The finest panels of old Oriental lacquer were incorporated in the furniture of Louis the Fourteenth's (and his great-grandson's) days.

Inventories taken at the conclusion of Louis the Fourteenth's

reign mention many lacquered pieces. Though probably the bulk of these were of Oriental make, yet many were of French or other European manufacture.

The floral paintings of Jean P. Monnoyer—gorgeous, pompous, and defiantly careless of nature in their combinations of spring and autumn flowers — are in sympathy with the decorative ideals of Le Brun.

BOULLE

In the vast *salons* of Versailles, singing with gold and colour, the ceremonial and formal *meubles de luxe* of André Charles Boulle take their place as part and parcel of the Sun King's gorgeous *entourage*, without apology or lack of dignity.

BOULLE CLOCK. LOUIS XIV. WINDSOR CASTLE.

Marqueterie-cutter, gilder, maker of metal mounts, and joiner, Boulle (sometimes spelt Boule or even Buhl)

LE PERE,

as the greatest of this family of fine furniture makers is called, was the son of Jean, and nephew of the Pierre Boulle who married the daughter of Jean Macé, Louis XIV.'s first *marqueteur*, and was himself an expert craftsman with state lodgings in the Louvre. Here he was joined in 1672 by his famous nephew, appointed by Louis XIV. personally whilst abroad campaigning, in reply to the following request for direction from Colbert: "(Macé) the *ebéniste*, who used to make the panels of frogs, is dead; he has a son who is not skilful in his profession. A man named Boulle is the most skilful man in France. Your Majesty will ordain, if it pleases him, to which

of these he wishes to grant his lodgings in the galleries." Louis XIV. wrote: "The lodgings in the galleries to the most skilful."

In furniture annals, at least, the name of *Louis Quatorze* is indissolubly linked with that of Boulle; first of the great French *ebéniste* inlayers, who, as long as but one of his masterpieces survives, will be pre-eminent among the great artist-craftsmen of decorative woodwork.

The royal patents conferred on Boulle describe him as "architect, painter, carver in mosaic, artist in cabinet work, craftsman in veneer, chaser, inlayer, and designer of figures," and until 1683 he devoted himself exclusively to producing *chefs d'œuvres* for his royal patron. Indeed, he has rightly been described as a maker of *meubles d'apparat*, or furniture for show.

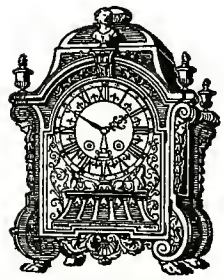
EBONY AND TORTOISESHELL

The use of ebony had become too well established in the preceding days of Louis Treize to be lightly discarded. Cabinets of that wood with some tortoiseshell and metal enrichments were made before Boulle's days. But it was given to Boulle to realise that the melancholic effect of the ebony was not satisfactorily mitigated either by *pietra dura* ornament, or by the ivory inlays of Italy and Flanders; that more colour and less ebony groundwork was necessary if cheerfulness was a desirable ingredient in design.

In what degree was Boulle's happy choice of tortoiseshell inlay suggested by a tentative prior use in Flanders, and even possibly in France itself during Louis XIII.'s days? and how far was his adoption of metal inlay the result of his knowledge of the Hispano-Portuguese decoration of shaped and perforated metal plates, pinned to the panels and framing of dark wooden furniture?

Boulle in his amended process adopted procedure similar to that of wood marqueterie-cutters. He glued together two sheets of brass,

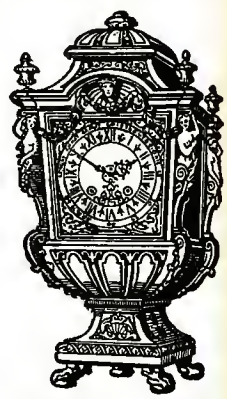
or white metal, upon two sheets of tortoiseshell, and cut the outline of the design through all the four layers; an equal number (four) of replicas of the pieces forming the pattern, and of matrices and grounds pierced with, or open spaces exactly fitting the pattern, resulted. By counterchanging these, so that the metal pieces were inserted in the tortoiseshell ground, and *vice versa*, four exactly similar designs as regards outline, in two sets of two each as regards colour, were obtained. The designs in metal upon a tortoiseshell field or ground are known as Boulle *premiere partie*, or first part, and are regarded as more desirable, Boulle himself preferring their use when unhampered by economy. Those in shell upon a metal ground (*Contre-Boulle*, or second part) are usually too glittering for the eye to dwell on with pleasure, though at times Boulle happily united *premiere* and *seconde*.



LOUIS XIV. HORLOGE RELIGIEUSE.

The engraving so necessary in much of Boulle's work, to the unfolding of the design, is also comparatively lost on the dark tortoiseshell pattern of *Contre-Boulle*.

Masses of the design were plain or "blind" until the engraver's lines into which a black pigment was rubbed, gave it life and meaning. Boulle and the artists who assisted him also added to the brilliancy of the effect by accentuating salient points of the framework with cast and chased brass or bronze gilt. This, at times, has tended towards heaviness, a defect sometimes noticeable in the framework, also in bronze-gilt relief, which is placed amid the marqueterie in such pieces as the *armoire* designed by Le Brun, and sold at the disposal of the Hamilton Collection for £12,000, and the *Coffret de Mariage* at the Louvre, shown in our Colour Plate No. XL.



LOUIS XIV. HORLOGE RELIGIEUSE.

In 1720 Boulle's workshops and stores, with his magnificent

collection of art-curios valued at £50,000, together with his stores of seasoned woods, models, unfinished or unsold work, and tools, the whole estimated as worth a million francs, were lost by a fire, probably caused by a revengeful thief who had been tied up for a few hours as a punishment. He died in poverty and disgrace, bequeathing only an incubus of debts to his less-gifted four sons, from which they never freed themselves, and were deprived of their rooms at the Louvre. Though dates are quite antagonistic to the theory, there seems a tendency to attribute to these sons, and Phillippe Poitou, who succeeded him as the king's marqueterie-cutter in 1683, most of the additional polychromy of horn-coloured vermilion—or blue, as in the Colour Plate No. XLI.

TYPICAL BOULLE DETAIL.

Boulle appears to have preferred pieces which desiderated large panels or spaces for decoration: commodes, armoires, cabinets, consoles, tables, desks, and clocks. *Commodes tombeaux*, or tomb chests, *commodes a panse* (paunch chests), are two forms of the bombé or curving Boulle commode.

BOULLE FURNITURE PRICES

The appreciation of decorative furniture is evidenced by comparing the price realised at a sale in 1755 of the Duc de Tallard's Collection, when armoires similar, as far as one may judge from the description of the two purchased for £12,000 at the Hamilton sale in 1882, were sold for 1000 livres, whilst a secretaire in red lacquer, by Martin Ainé, was sold for 360 livres, as against £15,000 given recently for a pair of *Régence* commodes. Yet Boulle work has been somewhat out of fashion's favour as compared

with the lighter productions of the great French cabinetmakers who succeeded him.

It is difficult to name more decorative furniture for the palace or apartments of public state than that of Boulle.

One must not mentally limit Boulle's productions to the metal and tortoiseshell methods we have described: he inlaid in woods also at intervals, employing the many-tinted foreign woods which were now increasingly imported. Some of his productions in wood distinctly foreshadow the marqueterie — in succeeding *Régence* and Louis XV. days—of his own and his sons' pupil Oeben.

WOOD INLAYS

Among the numerous richly figured "fancy" woods, with equally "fancy" names from the Indies, used in this and the following reign for veneering and marqueterie, were tulipwood, so called from some similarity of its striped leaf colouring to the common tulip leaf. "Zebra," citron, and kingwood (*bois du roi*), which derived its name from His Majesty's partiality for it. Holly was generally used for staining, when colours otherwise unobtainable were desired. It will be apropos to mention that in England the terms tulipwood and kingwood are applied usually to woods varying botanically considerably from those used in France under the equivalent of these names.

One sees in the contrastings, reversings, bandings, and other methods employed for marqueterie and veneering during Louis Quatorze days the source of many of the later Stuart and William and Anne ideas in decorative furniture. We need not dwell on the efforts made during the reign of Louis XIV. to introduce into French furniture ornamentation by coloured stones (*pietra dura*), since French work in this respect is vastly inferior to the Florentine original work.

French pre-eminence in sumptuous furniture of repose was continuous from the sixteenth century until nearly the conclusion of

the eighteenth. A bedstead in the inventory of the Château de Vaux was hung with embroidery of gold and silver, and was altogether of so elaborate a character that its value is stated to have been 14,000 livres. The hangings of another of these beds is stated to have occupied twelve years of embroider.

BEDS

played an important part in the public ceremonial life of the French Court during the period.

The *lit de parade* was a state bed on a platform, surrounded by balustrading: Louis XIV., who owned upwards of four hundred bedsteads, nearly half of which were distinctly decorative pieces of furniture, died on such a bed, and—as was the custom—lay in state for his people to see. The *lit de parade* was, in fact, somewhat of a survival of the bed upon which the honoured dead were laid in state, but was not in France confined to that funereal function.

The *lit clos*—a bed recessed in a cupboard and enclosed by doors: a most stuffy form of bed which fortunately has never been popular in England, but which survives, as will be noted in the chapter on the Bed, in Holland, Brittany, and other countries.

The *lit d'alcove*—a bed placed in a recess or space to which semi-state and privacy was also given by balustrading or columns. The alcove, a term of Spanish derivation (Alcoba, from the Moorish *Al Koba*, a tent or sleeping-place), became *de rigueur* from the days of the Fronde: it was not necessarily or usually, during Louis XIV. days, the constructed recess it became during his successors' times, but simply a small part marked off from the rest of the room by a balustrade or columns.

The *lit d'ange* was a bed with canopy at the head end, and with its counterpane continued over the foot end.

The *lit de camp* was not always so severely utilitarian as one

might imagine from its title: François Premier is stated to have spent upwards of 13,000 livres upon one; after which one is not surprised to read that Louis Quatorze possessed a *Lit du Sacre* which, with its broderies, was valued at 600,000 francs.

Among other types were the *lit de tombeau, lit tournant, lit a colounes, lit en dome*; all of which were introduced from France into England. Nor must mention be omitted of the *couchettes*, or small beds, often very elaborately wrought, which made their appearance during the preceding century.

When in royal occupation

LOUIS' STATE BEDROOM

at Versailles must have been a blaze of magnificent elaboration, with its tapestried chairs, embroidered hangings, mirrors and portraits, bronzed Cupids, and girandoles; the curtains of the bed being so ample as to completely conceal the royal occupant and enable him to remove his wig without loss of prestige.

AUDIENCES IN BED

Louis le Grand gave audiences *au lit*, an easy way of holding court, and presided at his parliaments on a *lit supreme*, or state couch: at each function the princes of the blood were allowed to sit upon or near the bed, the state officers were permitted to stand, and the commoners to kneel; whilst their monarch minimised the fatigue of existence by resting, one assumes, in a semi-recumbent position. So much did this easy mode of transacting business or pleasure commend itself to the nobles, that they also granted audiences *au lit*, and with an imitation of the state ritual to their friends: gradually, as around many other things sublunary, forms and observances accumulated, which ultimately led to the abandonment of the custom. In France, as in England, special names were at times

PLATE XL

COFFRET DE MARIAGE BOULLE

Musée du Louvre, Paris — Height, 5 ft. 11 in.; width, 3 ft. 3 in.; depth, 1 ft. 8 in.

There is a dual appropriateness in housing the typical example —one of a pair authoritatively attributed to the great André Charles Boulle—in that magnificent treasure-house of the Gallic arts the Louvre, for not only are these "*Bahuts*" peculiarly characteristic examples of Boulle's work, but in all likelihood they were made within its walls.

It will be remembered that the famous family of *ebénistes* owed much to the Louvre. Pierre Boulle, the founder of the line, of Swiss extraction, was among those foreigners who accepted its hospitality, when, in order to establish a nursery of the applied and fine arts, Henry of Navarre ordered the gallery of the Louvre to be so arranged that it would conveniently lodge a number of the best masters in decorative woodwork, as well as goldsmith's work, painting and sculpture, "and other excellent arts."

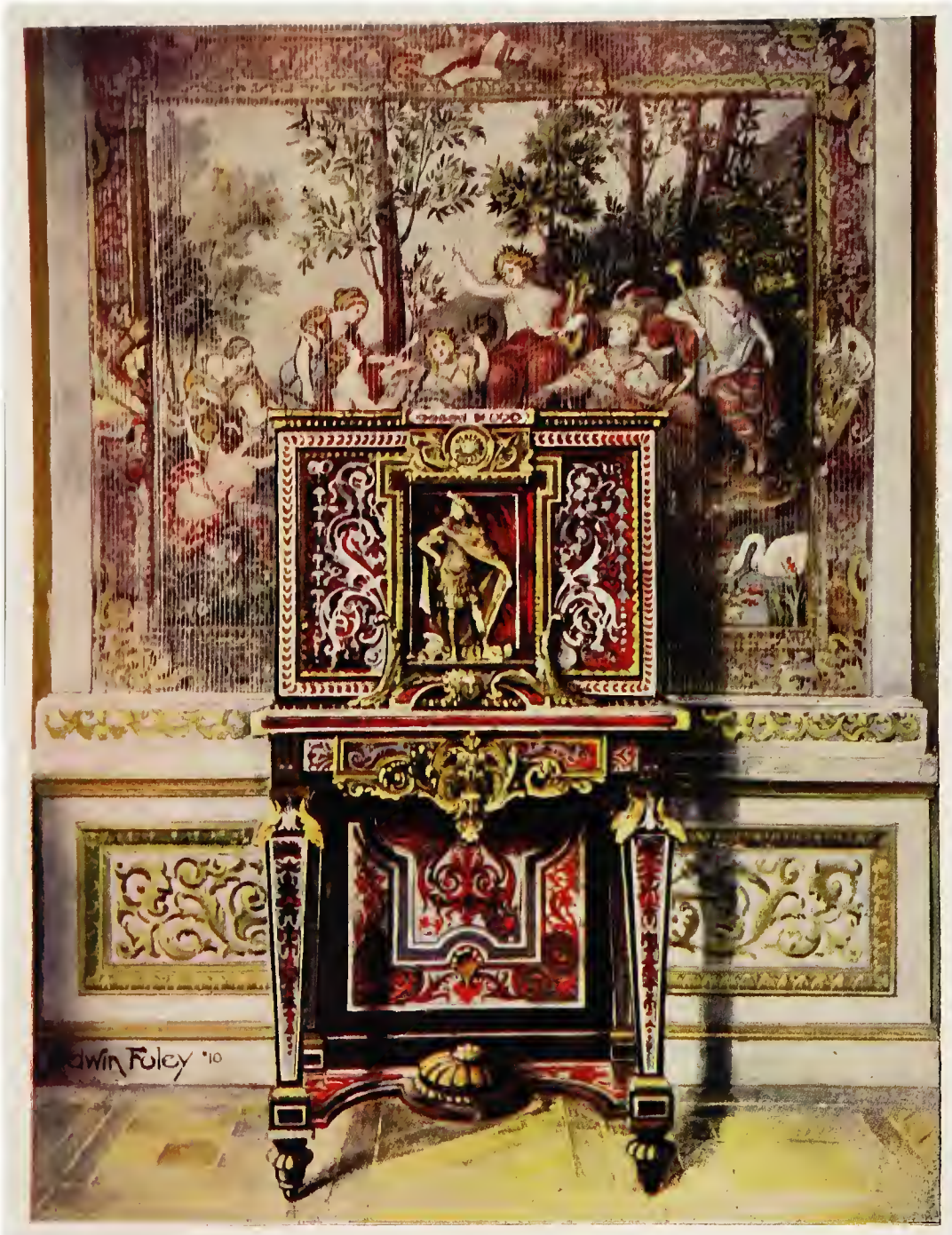
Boulle *le Père*, when he joined his uncle and succeeded to the lodgings vacated by the death of Jean Macé, entered upon no mere honorary possession. To understand the very real benefits accruing to the Louvre workers it should be remembered that the powerful trade corporation of Paris *huchiers menuisiers*, whose existence is definitely traceable as far back as 1396, possessed rights and ordinances confirmed in 1467 by Louis xi. and in 1580 by Henri iii. The power of this and allied guilds of the crafts concerned in the making of decorative furniture survived, little impaired during

Louis XIV. days, and not unnaturally they were prone to regard unprotected foreign craftsmen and their descendants with especial jealousy, and to exercise rigorously upon them the considerable powers which they possessed. The master craftsmen selected for the Louvre were not only free from payment of rent, they were free to practise the several branches of their craft, instead of confining themselves to one branch; their lodgment rendering them exempt from the surveillance of these trade guilds.

Under these favouring circumstances did André Charles Boulle develop the metal marqueterie now so indissolubly associated with his name—frequently spelt Boule—and corrupted when applied to his productions and imitations thereof into the term Buhl.

The figure in cast brass represents Louis le Grand in semi-armour, Roman toga, and full-bottomed wig—a sufficiently incongruous blend of costume to have served for Julius Cæsar, Antony, or Coriolanus, in an eighteenth-century British rendering of the Shakespearean drama.

The Galerie d'Apollon, of which the dado panelling is represented in our plate, was destroyed by fire, but restored from Le Brun's original designs and colouring in 1848. The Gobelins tapestry shown is the original fabric representing Apollo and the Muses also from Le Brun's design.


Edwin Foley '10

given to beds. Usually they were named after the subjects represented upon the draperies, when these were of a pictorial nature, or from their colour when plain.

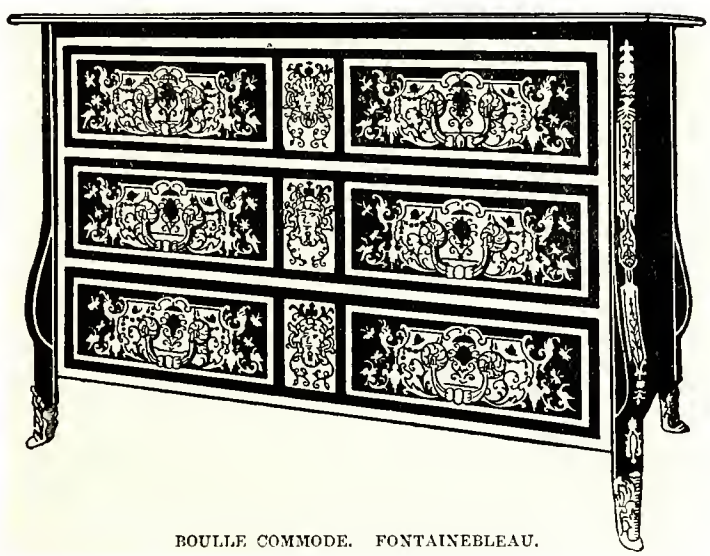
OTHER FURNITURE

The development of furniture into present-day forms proceeded apace. Commodes, cabinets, vitrines, and bureaus are among the pieces indebted to the ways and days of Louis Quatorze.

BOULLE COMMODE FROM THE MAZARIN LIBRARY, PARIS.

With all Louis' vast expenditure upon architecture, his name has probably been immortalised more by the magnificent results obtained with the relatively small amount spent upon furniture, than by the whole sum he poured out of his exchequer upon the building and grounds of Versailles.

Yet, though comparatively small, the cost of the making and repairing of furniture of the royal palaces must have reached formidable proportions, and the institution and encouragement of royal workshops and manufactories was, doubtless, in large measure an endeavour



BOULLE COMMODE. FONTAINEBLEAU.

to reduce expenses. Cabinets, writing-tables, pedestals, armoires, and clocks were produced in these state factories; indeed, the armoire was eminently fitted for the large *salons* of Louis Quatorze, and retained its vogue until, in succeeding reigns, rooms were built of smaller size. The bureau also assumed an importance among household gods which it has ever since retained. It is recorded that Madame de Maintenon, among others, was partial to its use.

The hoop-skirts attained proportions so enormous as to forbid their users' use of chairs and necessitate stools without back or arms; and, as considerable space was required for the evolutions of the fashionable beauties, the centre of the room was left bare, the furniture being set against the wall.

A suite of furniture during Louis XIV. days consisted usually of one sofa (or *canapé*), two arm-chairs or *fauteuils*, and nine stools or *tabourets*, be it noted, not chairs.

Doubtless Louis XIV., at the apex of his power, possessed much silver furniture, and caused it to be dispersed as his purse became depleted by his wars. De Launay, his silversmith, is stated to have produced silver furniture as late as 1691.

That most picturesque vehicle for eighteenth-century social perambulations, the *chaise à porteur* or Sedan chair, appears at the end of the seventeenth century, and is promptly decorated by the artists of the period.

TORCHÈRES

Torchères were placed in the corners of the large apartments to light up and decorate.

French furniture and French tapestries run chronologically together from the days when Francis I. opened a factory at Fontainebleau in 1531.

The floors were of parqueterie, partially covered in winter by

the soft-toned carpets of the Savonnerie, or Aubusson, or the more vivid products of Oriental looms.

Careful housewives using slip covers to protect their upholstery to-day, may—if stylists or anxious for musty precedents—find comfort in the knowledge that the carved, gilt, and occasionally painted couches, chairs, and sofas of the days of *Louis le Grand* had *housses* of taffeta, to protect the coverings of damask, velvet, or tapestry, and gold or silver nails. Canapés or sofas, the fauteuils or arm-chairs, the ordinary chair with a back, the tabouret or stool without arms or back, and folding stools, were all in use, but the rigorous etiquette of the court having decreed that the sofa and arm-chair were for the use of the highest, squabbles regarding precedence became so frequent that chairs were eventually provided at ceremonial functions for all—including even the princesses.

Towards the end of the seventeenth century,

MIRRORS,

being procurable in larger size than hitherto, were increasingly employed in panelling, etc., to face or to suggest windows. Even the bathrooms of the courtiers were panelled with mirrors.

THE GALERIE DES GLACES,

with its cool green and white marbles and mauve pilasters carrying the cornice, its seventeen windows balanced by corresponding arched mirrors in copper frames, surmounted by Le Brun's delicate flattery of his royal master by emblems of the Radiant Sun, and that symbol of Hercules, the lion's skin, is perhaps the most imposing of the Versailles *salons*. Its splendour must indeed have been great, when against its walls were placed the masterpieces of Boulle, and upon its floors the carpets of the Savonnerie; when its windows were

draped with white damask curtains woven with Louis' device; and the two enormous silverware candelabra vied in scintillations with the innumerable facets of the double row of crystal chandeliers.

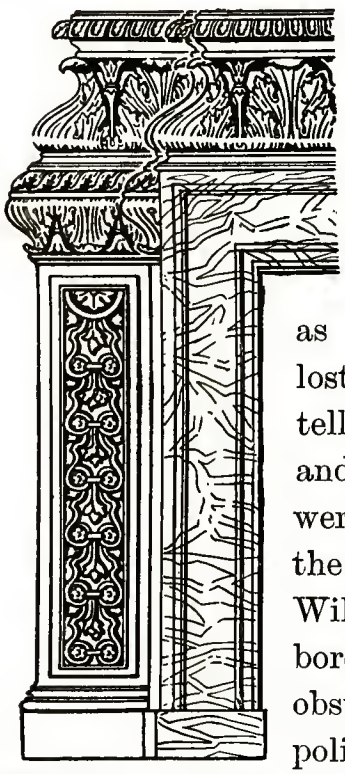
LE ROI SOLEIL,

nominally king at the age of five, promptly celebrated the death of his prime minister, Mazarin, by grasping the reins of despotic power, wherewith the centralising policy of that minister and Richelieu had bridled France. He showed his possession of the faculty, peculiarly useful to kings, of discerning genius and ability in others, by gathering around him a band, not only of politicians, soldiers, and priests, for the security and furtherance of his policy, but of the finest sculptors, architects, painters, and artists in the applied and decorative arts, to encompass him in dazzling majesty and pomp.

BOULLE ARMOIRE. *GARDE MEUBLE.*

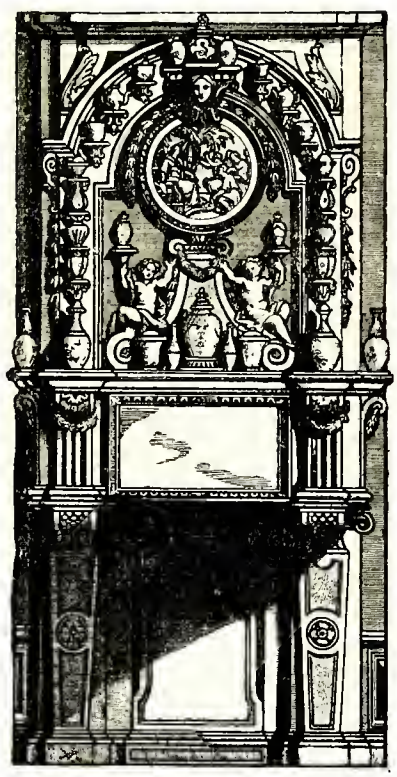
"L'état est moi" was no idle phrase when he stood for and made the France of his seventy-five years' reign; during many of which his country was placed at the summit of European politics. This, her Augustan age of literature, was adorned by La Rochefoucauld, Racine, Molière (who was trained in youth as a cabinetmaker), Fenelon, Corneille, Pascal, Bossuet, and La Fontaine, whilst such artists as

Le Brun, Le Pautre, Mansart, and Boulle, and, in the latter part of the reign, Watteau, evolved the first of her distinctly national modes.



CHIMNEYPIECE. AUDIENCE CHAMBER. PALAIS DE JUSTICE. RENNES.

While Colbert lived he exercised a wholesome curb on his master's obstinate arrogance, but after the queen and Colbert's death in 1683, and Louis' marriage in 1684 to the bigot Madame de Maintenon, who dominated his morose latter years, the splendour of his power gradually and deservedly sank under such acts as the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which lost France some 50,000 families of her most intelligent citizens, and enriched England, Holland, and Germany correspondingly. His Dutch wars were followed by those of the Spanish Succession; William III. and Marlborough were the chief obstacles to his foreign policy of aggrandisement and despotism, which seriously crippled his power abroad, whilst his despotism at home undoubtedly sowed the seed of permanent popular hostility to the Bourbon dynasty.

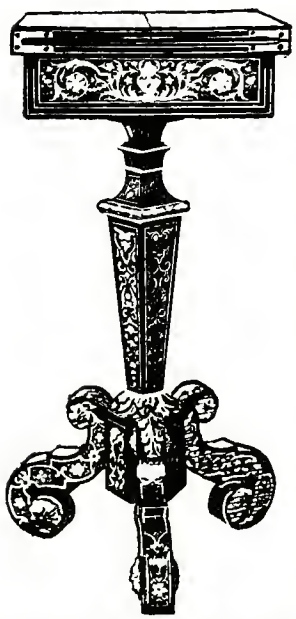


FACSIMILE OF DESIGN BY DANIEL MAROT. CHIMNEYPIECE OVERMANTEL WITH SHELVES FOR CHINA. LOUIS XIV.

THE STYLE

If it be true that France and the world are likely in future to hold the style of Louis XIV. in moderate estimation—as compared with those of Louis XV. and XVI.—one has to observe that it is no barren

thing to have inspired French decorative art towards distinctly national modes of expression, and, moreover, to have given a definite and homogeneous trend to all decorative details carried out during the period.



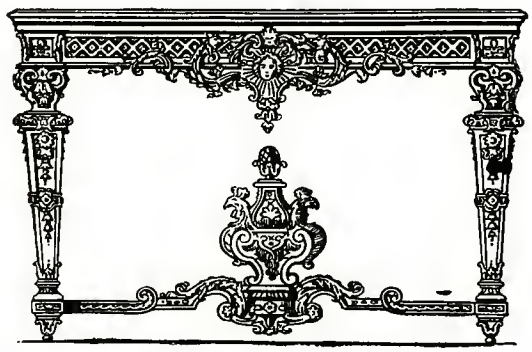
BOULLE TABLE WITH FOLDING FLAPS. WINDSOR CASTLE.

That Louis XIV. wearied of the pompous solemnity of his style, and gave the inception to the lighter, freer, and more voluptuous mode associated with the name of his successor, with its nymphs, rose garlands, shepherdesses, and cupids, can scarcely be doubted when one reads his note upon a drawing of his architect, Mansart: "That something must be changed, that the subjects are too serious, and that youth must be introduced into what is to be done. You will bring me some drawings—or at least some thoughts—when next you come. Childhood must be widespread everywhere." A comment whose immediate outcome may be traced in some of the fountains and statues of Versailles, and destined to have a vast influence upon French decorative modes.

THE JONES AND WALLACE COLLECTIONS

England possesses in the collection formed by the celebrated army tailor, Mr. John Jones,—a man of refined taste, who bequeathed to the nation at his death in 1882 *meubles de luxe* probably worth now ten times their cost to Mr. Jones,—and in the even more munificent collection similarly left by Lady Wallace, together with Hertford House; a series of French mobiliary masterpieces, moving certain official connoisseurs of France to jocularly declare that if France ever made war on England, it would be to reacquire these *chefs d'œuvres* of

her seventeenth- and eighteenth-century artists in wood. They, however, generously admitted that as two centuries had elapsed and two full-sized revolutions occurred, the British had an undeniable right to the pieces which they had acquired by purchase.



GILT TABLE BY JEAN BERAIN.

PLATE XLI

ARMOIRE IN EBONY WITH INLAYS OF ENGRAVED BRASS AND WHITE METAL. CHASED ORMOLU MOUNTINGS. THE ROYAL MONOGRAM OF L'S REVERSED WITHIN THE TURQUOISE BLUE OVAL MEDALLIONS. BOULLE. DESIGNED BY JEAN BERAIN

In the Jones Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington

Height, 8 ft. 6 in.; width, 4 ft. 9 in.; depth, 1 ft. 9 in.

The woodwork of this renowned example of Boulle's metalcraft, whilst entirely sufficing, is comparatively so simple that one cannot endorse the claim at times advanced that this armoire is the chief among the *chefs d'œuvres* of the world's woodwork. Yet one willingly concedes the perfection of technique displayed in its characteristic metal marqueterie. Made in all probability for Louis xiv., it was probably among those sold at the great sale in Revolutionary days. Purchased by Mr. Jones, the army clothier, it divides with the Marie Antoinette escritoire the distinction of being pre-eminent among the gems of the renowned collection presented to the nation. Mr. Jones is believed to have given nearly £5000 for this armoire. There would be little difficulty in selling the armoire now for twice that sum.

Much of the artistry of its marqueterie is dependent in no small degree upon the burin of the engraver. The design is "blind" in parts, such as the squirrels, birds, cupids, and masks, until the

engraver's deft lines (into which a black pigment is rubbed) give it meaning and spirit.

Its ornament displays all the characteristics of Berain's prolific pencil, and it is usually ascribed to him. André Charles Boulle its maker, is himself stated by a contemporary authority, to have "had by nature the most felicitous disposition towards the fine arts"; so much so that had his father not desired him to succeed in his own craft, he would in all likelihood have been a painter.

Edwin Foley '09

BRITISH HOMES OF OTHER DAYS

THE HOUSE, THE HALL, AND THE HEARTH

"An English Home . . .
. . . All things in order stored.
A haunt of ancient peace."

THE English home and its shrine, the hearth, adapting itself, century by century, to every change of development, has gradually stored up as part of its essence, charms so potent that it would be difficult to find a subject more intimately and romantically interwoven with the lives of the Anglo-Saxon races. Even did we not all live in houses—and most of us build, if but in day-dreams, an ideal home, or family shelter, voicing our needs and inspirations — there is no surer index of personal and national character than is mutely recorded in the equipment of the home.

Concede "irrationality" if one must, and the elusive subtlety of its constituents as one may, the magic glamour cast by the spirit of antiquity over many a belonging of bygone days, is apt to strangely move the mysterious chords of feeling imbedded in the heart of man. One pities him, who, less wise than his children, would stifle its notes: never consciously permit himself the luxury of embroidering his existence with fairy tales, romantic, poetic, pathetic; never allow the *aura* of olden times to colour his daily life. One writes "consciously," for even he who expresses wonderment at the survival of this oldest, cheapest, and most delightful of human playthings, will find its workings, within himself.

That the "roots of the Present lie deep in the Past" is the reason

why often when we think an object beautiful to the eye, its real appeal is to the mind, to certain latent sympathies, associations, and memories.

Architecture and furniture developing, century by century, by adaptation to the evolving needs of succeeding generations, become thus charged, as it were, with mental and temperamental attractions largely independent of actual appearance.

The appeal of the English house, in common with its contents, is essentially to the national temperament, and the styles of the past live in the national estimation, almost as much because the race understands and sympathises with the ideas and habits which gave them birth, as because of their visible beauty of form or colour.

The first shelters of man, the cave, the tree, and the tent, appear scarcely more remote from his present-day home, than does the Saxon *aula*, which in its turn gave way to the early wooden Norman house with a moated mound: followed later by the Norman fortress of stone, retaining the mound plan somewhat, whilst substituting stone walls for the wooden palisade, and enlarging the central structure into

THE NORMAN KEEP

> "Grated grim and close,
> Hemmed in by battlements and fosse
> And many a darksome tower,"

which held the field until, under the Tudors, defensive character was no longer necessary, nor allowed.

The Norman castle built in England after the Conquest, was a place for men—a masculine affair,—not a home wherein the arts of peace might flourish, but a stronghold for soldiery to dominate the surrounding country and defy attack. Comfort was entirely subordinated to safety. Its position was in consequence determined, not by conditions of health, convenience of access or beauty of

landscape, but that it might command some strategic point, or levy toll upon travellers by some river or road. All its arrangements were subordinate to defence, and men, women, and children were herded during times of siege, with neither comfort nor decency; without distinction of age, sex, or condition. Though the same stern strength and utility which designed the castle are among the sanest of artistic elements, the interior formed no place for decorative furniture. The "keep" of the Norman castle was the domestic part—the "household" of the family.

It is evident from frequent allusions, that the ordinary home of men of wealth, until much later than the fourteenth century, was equally simple, having but one other apartment besides the hall, which served both as the bedchamber and the usual room of the lady and her maids.

"THE MARSH"

However much inclined to ingratitude at the modern discovery of the pathogenic germ, and of dangers galore in all habits and customs of existence, few would care to revert to the sanitary ignorance of early Norman days. It is conjectured that the greater longevity of the men compared with the women was largely due to the rheumatism, ague, and other diseases, contracted by the latter, who spent so much more of their time indoors, breathing insanitary air, and standing on the bare earth, or on the marsh, as the floor was sometimes called when strewn with rushes which had been suffered to remain until quite rotten. Affairs were little better in the winter: when a fire was kindled, the smoke meandered leisurely upwards to find exit through the unglazed windows, or the central hole in the roof. At Easter the progenitor of the "spring clean" fortunately appeared and moved the rulers of the household to do away with the fires, to "deck the chambers with fair

flowers and to strew the floors with green rushes." The unhygienic nature of this "grass carpet" was evidently recognised in Tudor days, when the chair had become a usual item of the household equipage. The provision of stretchers, or rails connecting the front legs, raised a few inches from the floor, was doubtless to serve the double purpose of adding strength to the chair and of forming a footrest, protecting the sitter from damp and pollution. *En passant* the increase of indoor work and pastimes for men has probably conduced to the reversal of the relative mortality of the sexes.

These rude Norman times appear singularly barbaric contrasted with those of pre-Christian Greece and Rome. The nobles travelled from castle to castle by rough roads, with many a grim encounter by the way, carrying their rude furniture and other goods with them, slung upon the backs of mules and sumpter horses.

MOBILE HOUSEHOLD GODS

Chests were the heaviest furniture. Tables were merely movable boards supported by trestles. Chairs were made to fold, beds to take to pieces—in fact, all furniture was made that it might be moved easily; with the carpet and hangings, which were unrolled and hooked to the walls, whenever a home was reached.

It helps one to grasp the dangers and difficulties of old-time road-travelling to remember that, for centuries later, despite a solidity of build in the carriages almost equal to that of timber wains, breakdowns were so frequent that tools for repair were an indispensable part of the carriage outfit. The box-seat was the seat on the tool-box or chest, and the hammercloth was so called, after the most necessary tool in the outfit, which also included pincers, scissors, clout nails, clouts, and lynch pins.

'HE WARS OF THE ROSES

ripped the supremacy and the dominance (even when divided) of the reat nobles, whilst the invention of gunpowder and artillery aided the ingly power by placing at the monarch's disposal weapons enabling im, with a comparatively small number of men, to bring the trouble- ome lord and his castle to terms. This passing of the baronial upremacy, combined with the suppression of the feudal relations etween the lord and his retainers, and the breaking of the rule of he monk with its living in common, all combined to change the raditional design of the baron's home.

The increase of prosperity and power in the middle classes during he Wars of the Roses, and the wealth let loose by the dissolution of he monasteries in 1535–39, provided funds for the erection of many a tately home during the closing years of Henry VIII.'s reign, and the nsuing Elizabethan period; which witnessed the disuse of the sombre ortified castle type and the advent of courtly and more gracious ansions, whose positions were selected mainly with regard to the arrying out of Bacon's principle that "Houses are made to live , and not to looke on. Therefore let Use bee preferred before niformitie," paraphrased by Pugin in his definition of the character- tics of all pure furniture, "That even the smallest detail should have meaning or serve a purpose, and the construction should be adapted the material employed."

In France the suggestion of the castle survives to this day in the âteau with its usually meaningless turrets; but

'HE ELIZABETHAN MANOR HOUSE

ave for its occasional embattled parapets) cut itself adrift from its rogenitors. Though the defensive ditch was for awhile regarded as sential, the necessarily level site required for this water-defence

combined, with the introduction of the Renaissance, to produce the more formal regularity (as compared with the rugged castle) marking the typical Elizabethan mansion. Royal licence was required to build the moated manor house.

From these days was witnessed the more frequent use of rich tapestried hangings and wainscoting for the walls of the long galleries, of glass for windows, screens against draught, and chimneys for the fire, together with some attention to the cleanly keeping of the floor; all heralding a degree of domestic comfort and luxury previously unknown in England. The development of the house was the development of its plan fully as much as of its elevation. Only when baron and priest had lost their power could private life, and freedom to build and adorn the home as the owner pleased, exist.

The desire for a brave appearance, which at times got the upper hand, and a blend of homely simplicity and pedantry give to the plans and elevations of many Elizabethan and Jacobean mansions a piquant individualism. Conceits in stone are serious affairs to their builders mayhap, but provided they do not interfere with the essentials of the home, the man who paid for them may be pardoned by the man who sees them.

THE GREAT HALL,

the "houseplace," was the parent cell out of which was gradually evolved the complex structure of the modern house, with its satisfaction of a hundred needs, æsthetic, sanitary, and otherwise protective or comfort-yielding. To complete the biological parallel, the parent cell has in the average modern British home shrunk to the shadow of its former size, having become a mere lobby or passage, providing space only for a narrow gangway, and for the hanging up of hats and coats.

The great hall was the common meeting-ground, the centre of the home, where all had board and many bedded, in the more or less

merry primitive communal days, when privacy may have been little desired, and master, mistress, men, and maids sat together, regardless of the unsightliness of Jock's leathern apron, or Jill's greasy woollens.

From its heavy oaken beams were hung not only implements and spoils of the chase and war, such as helmets, shields, lances, bow-staves and fishing-rods, but flitches of bacon, rows of hams, geese, and other preserved meaty provisions, together with strings of onions, household tools, and utensils; the whole presenting an appearance of homeliness probably more appealing to the average man than the finest painted ceilings of later days.

The exteriors of old English homes, in common with their interiors, have a very pleasant national character, largely born of frank acceptance of requirements, means, and local materials; indeed, in olden days, an intelligent traveller might tell in what part of the land he was, by glancing at the wayside cottages, the farms or manor houses—with their picturesque half-timber work in the wood-wealthy counties, or dignified stone, where that material was near and easily quarried.

In Scotland woodwork and architecture of other than the strictest utility were scarcer and changes slower, the country being so torn with local and clannish feuds, that defence and the fortified house ranked before comfort and the manor house, until a later period than in England.

THE HEARTH

"Each man's chimney is his Golden Milestone,
Is the central point from which he measures every distance."

As was the hall to the architecture and general life of the old-time houses, so was—and is—the hearth, to the intimate family life—its centre. The history of the fireplace is the history of civilisation, dating from the days when man's need for and love of comfort,

unsatisfied by shelter and clothing, led him to the making of fires inside his home. At first these fires were kindlings of wood, flung down on the floor, or upon a central stone, the hearth, and little provision was made for the carrying off of the smoke save by a hole in the roof. When "fireplaces" were built in the Norman halls, this roof exit was supplemented by slits in the external walls, and some crude attempts at chimney flues seem to have been made. In Italy, where the chimneypiece appears to have been unknown in houses until the fourteenth century, it is said to have owed its invention to a certain Lord of Carrara, who, not liking the "fireboxes" in the middle of the room, had them removed, and hooded projections of an architectural and decorative nature built.

Leland the historian, in the time of Henry VII., expresses wonder and astonishment at the fireplaces of Bolton Castle, built during the reign of Richard II.: "One thynge I much notyd in the haulle of Bolton," he writes, "how chimneys were conveyed by tunnels made on the syds of the wauls betwyxt the lights in the haul, and by this means and by no others is the smoke of the hearthe in the haule wonderously straungely conveyed."

Another chronicler, Harrison, as late as the sixteenth century, looked upon a chimney and a fixed grate against the wall as a sign of degeneracy, preferring the old English fire upon a centre hearth, which could be readily enclosed by the *couvre-feu* at the ringing of the *couvre-feu* bell or curfew.

Soon, however, the small "fireplaces" against the wall, which had been introduced apparently in England first into the more private apartments, gained converts, and were adopted in an enlarged form in the hall and other larger apartments of the house. Soon also the chimney built in the wall had its chimneypiece—at first a hood built upon corbels, a wide open receptacle for the smoke given out by the great wood logs — and became the gathering-place of the family.

THE "INGLENEUK"

"Damsell loke there be
A fyre in the chymene
With ffagottes of fyre tree."

The recessed chimney corner, or inglenook, was an outcome of our ancestors' desire to find a screen from the draughts. The privacy of the inglenook was an added virtue.

The early chimney openings were huge in comparison with those of modern times: not only were they used to cure sides of bacon: at times secret hiding-places—reached with the aid of a ladder—were contrived in them. Oldcorne and Garnet were concealed in one of these secret rooms after the Gunpowder Plot. The depths of some of these openings can be gauged from the discovery mentioned in the notes relative to the carved stairway forming Colour Plate XXVIII., at the old Kentish manor house of Godinton during alterations, of three successive fireplaces with ample hearths behind each other!

Few of us realise—when basking in our easy-chairs before the fire surrounded by little comforts which monarchs of the Middle Ages were devoid of—that until nearly the conclusion of the Middle Ages only ladies of rank were permitted to place their seats before the hearth.

It appears to be taken for granted, upon what authority I know not, that andirons were always used, and that the yule log, with its cheerful crackling and weirdly playful dancing masque of light and shadows, was always laid horizontally. May not our ancestors sometimes have done in olden times as the Turks and Persians do to these days where speedy and bright fires are necessary—*i.e.* place the faggots or other combustible logs vertically, to ensure more rapid combustion?

Intimately connected with the hearth and the fire is

THE CURFEW,

that relic of bygone days, concerning which much misapprehension seems to be entertained.

The curfew bell we have all heard. It was not, however, an instrument of tyranny designed by the despotic Norman to annoy the common people, but took its name from the *couvre-feu*, a metal cover intended *not to put out the fire, but to keep it safely alight.* The embers of the fire were raked together to the back of the hearth, and the "curfew" was placed over them; enclosing them and leaving but an extremely small margin for the admission of air. The fire consequently smouldered all night, its embers safely enclosed, and the house, usually of wood and draughty, protected from possibility of fire.

Holinshead (in 1587) confirms this by stating that William the Conqueror ordered that the "Maistre of every household, about eight of the clocke of the evening, should cause his fire to be raked up in ashes, his lights to be put out, and then go to bed." The Curfew law then was for the preservation of the fire under proper safeguards, not for its extinction. In these days of matches one is apt to forget the value of the kindled fire in olden days: if it went out recourse had to be had to the church where the cresset was always kept burning, quite as much for supplying the parishioners' secular fires, as for any religious purpose.

The use of the *couvre-feu*, or curfew fire cover, continued in France until the eighteenth century, but in England it appears to have become obsolete when the inflammable timbered houses were superseded by brick buildings, whilst the practice of ringing the curfew bell as an indication of time had become so interwoven into English life, that it has survived until modern days.

COAL VERSUS WOOD

In the days of Charles I. the scarcity and increased cost of wood rendered the use of coal inevitable despite prohibitions and penalties; despite also the opposition of the woodmongers and of London's colour-loving citizens, entertaining apparently prophetic previsions of London fogs and doubled death-rates from this "Smoake of the bottomless pit."

By the middle of Charles I.'s reign, coal was in common use in seaboard towns, and caused alterations in the shape of the domestic hearth. To sit in an ingle seat and inhale (or be smoked by) clean wood smoke is practicable, and not altogether unpleasant, but to inhale the gases thrown off by coal smoke is quite another matter. The old height of the opening was found too great to "draw" properly and to prevent smoking. To coax the heavier coal smoke up the chimney was indeed no easy task, and a narrow flue was found necessary. Other provision was found to be desirable for holding the coals. Gradually the cresset and basket yielded to the new shapes of that new craftsman — the grate-maker — in which the supports for the logs, wrought in iron and even in silver (with many quaint devices, of which the dogs' heads were the most usual) survived, in an emasculated form, as ornaments only.

Cast-iron, unloved and unlovely when its design is imitative of wrought-iron, is quite decorative when, frankly accepting the limitations of casting methods, the designer restricts his ornament to bold simple forms, as did the old Sussex casters for the fire-dogs and firebacks, from as early as the middle of the sixteenth century.

The abolition of the chimney or

HEARTH TAX

in 1689 at William III.'s instigation greatly encouraged the building of chimneys for the poorer houses. With the chimney came the mantel-shelf, for the purpose originally of hanging up wet mantles to dry.

The introduction of large silvered mirror plates in the latter half of the eighteenth century sealed the fate of the high shelved chimneypiece: the opportunity of keeping the standard of taste constant to the highest ideal by gazing at one's face, whilst toasting one's legs, has been appreciated ever since.

We have noted elsewhere how in, late Gothic times, the custom of master, mistress, man, and maid sitting together in the hall, fell into desuetude: that

> "The Lorde ne the Ladye lyketh not to sytte
> Now hath eche syche a rule to eaten by himselfe
> In a pribee parlour."

To refer but briefly to a feature of English homes of other days which has during modern times increased in importance,

THE ENGLISH DINING-ROOM

was at first simply a part of the great hall, divided off by a screen for the family. The deep bay window used for semi-private conference between friends grew into a parlour wherein in the days when

> "Civil dudgeon first grew high,
> And men fell out, they knew not why,"

—so that even the members of one's household could scarcely be trusted, —one could speak in greater privacy. Among the first divisions of the

PLATE XLII

KNEEHOLE WRITING TABLE IN RED TORTOISESHELL. LACQUER STEEL TOP. BOULLE

GILT FAUTEUILS, UPHOLSTERED IN TAPESTRY

In Louis xiv. Chambre à coucher, Versailles

There can be little question that André Charles Boulle, *ciseleur et doreur du roi,* was the chief producer of the sumptuous woodwork made for the royal palaces during the reign of Louis xiv., when, in Lady Dilke's words, "Italian tendencies were absorbed, harmonised, and sobered by the French genius."

Though not so enriched as other indisputable examples of Boulle's craftsmanship of slightly later date, the Versailles piece presented overleaf with its surroundings in Louis the Fourteenth's bedchamber is characteristic of his treatment of the kneehole writing table, which, in common with other writing furniture, was practically originated in the latter half of the century.

Berain and Le Brun, as has been noted, are credited with having supplied Boulle with the designs for his important pieces. In a sense all his works were of that character, for Boulle *le Père* was a veritable aristocrat among woodwork craftsmen, apparently making only furniture of state or *meubles de luxe.*

In concluding our comment upon Boulle and the metal marqueterie with which his name and fame are connected, it may be well to mention that in modern cheap imitations of his pro-

ductions, the horn, the pearl, and the shell, are more frequently false, and that even the ebony is imitated by pearwood stained.

The beginnings of French upholstery are in the reign of Louis Treize, when the search after comfort led to appreciation of stuffed forms of arm-chairs, whose high backs and enlarged seats were covered with tapestry from the looms of Beauvais. During the reigns of Louis XIV. and XV. upholstery was further developed, the *fauteuils* shown being of late period.

Edwin Foley &co

house of which one reads, was the Bower or Ladies' Chamber, with an "eye" or earlet slit, opening to the hall. Many a good dame may have sat with vigilant ear and eye alternately applied to this opening, watching her servitors at their work or play, and perchance storing up material for a few remarks to her husband after his festivities with his friends.

This desire for privacy as a safeguard has probably had much more to do with the disuse of the hall by the master and mistress than the reason R. L. Stevenson humorously suggests in his *Inland Voyage*. "At a certain stage of prosperity, as in a balloon ascent, the fortunate person passes through a zone of clouds, and sublunary matters are henceforth hidden from his view. He finds himself surrounded in the most touching manner by the attentions of Providence, and compares himself involuntarily with the lilies and the skylarks. If all the world dined at one table, this philosophy would receive some shocks."

Whilst the feudal system lasted, it rendered the interests of lord and vassal identical: the master probably felt himself free to speak without fear of "leakage" in his hall, but with its decay arose this desire for privacy, intensified by the family divisions and quarrels, which often occurred in the civil wars, when father and son were so frequently to be found upon opposite sides.

Until late Georgian or early Victorian days, the dining-room was usually a parlour or living room as well. Though the splitting up of the parlour into the dining-room, and the withdrawing or drawing room for conversational and social amenities, was a further concession to women's gentler nature and privileges, it has resulted in the dining-room being regarded as merely an apartment into which "one goes," as William Morris once put it, "as one does into a dentist's parlour for an operation—the tooth out or the dinner in."

With which characteristic British growl at an equally characteristic British institution, one must reluctantly leave one of the many

fascinating historical byways of decorative furniture: the less reluctantly since other phases on the evolution of our islands' homes, incidentally casting light upon the evolution of the bedroom and other apartments, are touched upon more relevantly in "The Bed" and other chapters of Decorative Furniture.

FINDS, FRAUDS, FACTS, AND FANCIES IN OLD FURNITURE: A CHAPTER ON COLLECTING

"There's one joy unconfined to the wealthy,
An art no one thinks of rejecting:
The subtle, accomplished, and stealthy
Art of collecting."

EVEN the least acquisitive experience at times stirring of that impulse which—in the words of Macaulay's brilliant if superficial essay—led Walpole, having indulged "in the recreation of making laws and voting millions," to return "to more important pursuits, to researches after Queen Mary's comb, Wolsey's red hat, the pipe which Van Tromp smoked during his last sea fight, and the spur which King William struck into the flank of Sorrel."

The old work which the collector finds, with ever-increasing difficulty, in the farmhouse, cottage, or village inn, was frequently discarded from the manor-house by its professedly more cultured Georgian owner, on account of its being "so old fashioned"; a similar reason to that which prompted the concealment by stucco of the fine old half-timbered work in the gables of houses at Salisbury, Warwick, Stratford-on-Avon, and a score of other old country towns.

Judicious collecting of old decorative furniture is now recognised as not only a safe and remunerative investment for capital, but a very fascinating pursuit.

Whether the French critic's assertion that the passion for collecting is actuated rather by a desire for the rare and unusual, than a taste for the good or beautiful, be true or not, certain it is that

THE COLLECTING PROCLIVITY

has now emerged from the class of activities, upon evidence of which doctors gave certificates of enforced retreat, and has become a well-organised outlet for taste, knowledge, enthusiasm, and patience. All good reasons why antique furniture collecting has been less a mere hobby of Fashion, taken up enthusiastically to-day to be abandoned to-morrow; and more a steadily growing phase of the quest of the beautiful. It has been the direct means of rescuing many a sturdy old specimen—a chest mayhap banished to the attic, on account of its unfashionable design, after centuries of guardianship of feminine fineries, or degraded to such base uses as a rabbit hutch or coal receptacle. The loss too, by exportation to the United States, of so much of our old national woodwork, formerly the pride of our countryfolk, renders it little short of a duty—in default of a much-needed society for the preservation of ancient furniture upon the lines of that guarding our ancient buildings—to individually conserve such old pieces as fortune may throw across our path.

COLLECTING BY DEPUTY

There are at least two courses open to the amateur who has decided to collect old decorative woodwork: the first is to employ a real expert, whose daily experiences render him an exceedingly difficult person for the best-baited traps of the wiliest dealer to catch, and who at small commission will place his knowledge at service.

This obviously is the course for the wealthy unlearned, actuated mainly by the desire to possess fine old work, caring for the results rather than for the incidents and excitements of the chase.

Even such a course, however, is not a guarantee against deception: one has to catch one's expert; for the average dealer cannot be accepted as one. Rich though he may be in rule of thumb formulæ for allocating pieces to some half-dozen styles, his ignorance of their history and of the men who assisted to make them is too often deplorable; though one seldom encounters so profound an instance as that related by Mr. Litchfield (an authority of much practical experience on these phases of the subject), of a dealer, who in an action for compensation for loss by fire of a piece described it as "a fourteenth-century bureau" (!): one in *Louis Quatorze* style being apparently intended; and upon being asked if the mistake, in putting the century for the king in the schedule, affected his view of the value, replied, "Well, provided both the gentlemen lived about the same time, I don't see as it does."

The other and far more fascinating course is that of

COLLECTING PERSONALLY,

provided the amateur does not fall a victim to the expensive egotism of buying personally at auction sales against experienced *habitués*. It is always better, until years of experience in the little ways of the saleroom have made one versed in its procedure, to enlist a dealer of repute and pay him five per cent. for purchasing —or even to approach the trade purchaser of a desired piece, and buy of him at a fair profit. Many amateurs are apt to fancy they possess the necessary qualities and experience for personally conducting their saleroom purchases; their disillusionment is but a matter of time: they are fortunate if the discovery that they were

but sheep in the hands of the shearer, is not paid for too dearly. One would advise collectors to examine thoroughly old pieces on sale in the reputable auction marts—to watch their sales—but not to buy personally if they wish to buy cheaply.

THE "KNOCK OUT"

It is not our purpose to dwell at length upon the sordid mysteries of the arrangements made at times by rings of dealers; whereby one or other, through the abstention from bidding of the rest, becomes the purchaser of pieces at a fraction of their real value. These acquisitions are subsequently disposed of at a species of private auction held by the "ring," the differences in prices being at times enormous. Mr. Litchfield mentions as a well-known instance, a Louis XV. table sold at an Exeter auction for £32, the ultimate holder, a French dealer, paying £1000, the difference being divided between those who shared in the conspiracy of silence.

To many "the hunt's the thing": that "the game" has become more and more scarce, but enhances the joy of the chase: many a country ramble is enlivened, even nowadays, by discovering some old piece in a cottage, farmhouse, or village inn. That it is not to be bought need not mar the joy of finding; if the collector has but the wisdom to become the philosopher on occasions, when he cannot gratify his acquisitive, as well as his inquisitive, instincts.

A COLLECTOR'S HOME

What an eloquent diary of his fortunate perceptions, knowledge, and taste, is the enthusiastic connoisseur's home: the more so if he is catholic in his collections. To notice only its decorative furniture; a sixteenth-century chest of crude "Romayne" work may stand beside a gilt *gesso*-decorated *cassone*—the finished product of the Italian Renaissance of the same period. A Japanese lacquer screen

form indifferently a background to one of Boulle's *armoires*, a Burgundian *credence*, or a Hepplewhite commode. An *escabeau* of Louis Treize days whereon princesses have sat, may do duty as the footstool for the high throne of some former "interesting eastern potentate": and many another thought-provoking antithesis.

We cannot all amass so diverse a collection: one's surroundings, moreover, should have a voice, as well as one's taste and income, in the choice. If one is the favoured owner of an old mansion, or even an old country house or large farmhouse, old oak collecting is indicated; if our abode is one of the Georgian town houses, then some of the "many things divinely done by Chippendale and Sheraton" should be our objective. Most collectors realise that, fine as is English oaken furniture, it needs appropriate environment, and does not blend so readily with the modern home life as the walnut and mahogany modes which succeeded.

Minute but extremely interesting study of old pieces will be requisite, before efficiency is obtained. The collector will do well to obtain a guarantee from the dealer—and to see that it is as definite and binding in its wording as possible.

Buy only what is good: better a small "genuine" than a large "doubtful."

PATINA,

or surface condition, is one of the chief features in old work which should be studied, as the "faker" cannot reproduce its subtleties, since they are owing to time, wear and tear. The term is applied with equal accuracy to the surface-condition and colouring of old bronzes and of old furniture. In treating of old oak panelling we have noticed the chief causes conducing to *patina*. In a minor degree, however, it is as characteristic of eighteenth-century mahogany as of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century oak work.

RESTORING

It occasionally happens that this valued touch of the old artist, Time, is scraped and denuded of polish by the restorer or some zealous ignoramus, perchance that it may be brightly polished. Sad indeed is the fate of the genuine piece deprived thus not only of one of its chief charms, but condemned henceforth to have its *bona fides* suspect.

The ignorant "restorer" is more harmful than the "neglecter"; his zeal taints or blights all it touches. The newly engaged house carpenter who, to prove his zeal, diligently occupied himself during his master's absence abroad in filling up the pores of the old wainscot panelling, and bright polishing the old oak furniture, is a more serious criminal than his comrade who removed the skin lining of the Spanish coffer "because the hair was untidy."

CIRCULAR SAWS IN 1710!

An interesting story is recorded of Herreshoff, the blind builder of racing yachts, who had trained his sense of touch to compensate him for the loss of sight. It was noticed that he, alone among the guests, refrained from favourable comment after examining, with his fingers, a cabinet which his hostess was proudly displaying as a production of Queen Anne's days. Upon being questioned privately by a friend, Herreshoff replied, "I'll let you into a secret if you don't breathe a word of it to our good friend, Mrs. A——." The promise having been given, Herreshoff led the way to the cabinet and, extracting a drawer, ran the tips of his fingers over the bottom, and chuckled as he said, "Circular saws in 1710! Poor Mrs. A——!" His exquisite sense of touch had immediately detected the circular tearing of the wood fibres in the drawer bottom: never found upon either the inside or exterior of genuine oak or walnut furniture of the period.

PLATE XLIII

PANELLING, FROM AN OLD HOUSE NEAR HOLBORN, WITH GRINLING GIBBON CARVINGS

MIRROR FRAME, NOW IN THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM, SOUTH KENSINGTON

WALNUT TABLE, LATE WILLIAM AND MARY
WALNUT CHAIR, EARLY WILLIAM AND MARY
} Property of the VISCOUNTESS WOLSELEY

CHARLES WESLEY'S WALNUT HIGH-CASE CLOCK
WESLEY HOUSE, CITY ROAD

APPROPRIATELY housed in Hampton Court Palace, the typical chair and table forming part of Lord and Lady Wolseley's collection of late Carolean and Anne-Georgian furniture, is far too strongly built to be afflicted with "nerves." It remains unaffected, like its owners, in apartments stated to be haunted by one of the several ghostly visitants with which the palace is credited: that of a Mrs. Penn—who, when Henry VIII.'s third wife, Jane Seymour, died shortly after giving birth to Edward VI., became his foster-mother as well as nurse. The traditions are that queen and nurse at times appear, and that no royal child born in the palace survives the nurse's appearance.

Whilst, with the accession of William and Mary, Dutch furnishings became *de rigueur* in England, the treatment of the walls remained under the direct architectural influence of the classic-Renaissance school of Sir Christopher Wren, which afforded full scope for the supreme craftsmanship of the carver, Grinling Gibbon.

Gibbon was as true an artist in his own craft as any painter of picture or sculptor of marble. He lovingly designed, carved, gilded, and caressed the works of his earnest soul; but the world does not seem

to have used him over-generously. It seldom does such men, but we need accord him little pity, for it was surely given him to find his "Eden in the craftsman's brain" "in his own trade." He worked almost entirely in wood during the earlier part of his career, and despite the soft woods he used, their wonderful undercutting to almost a "feather edge," and their naturalistic fragility, much of his work remains marvellously well preserved.

In addition to the choir stalls of St. Paul's, Gibbon carved much woodwork for the city churches which were rebuilt after the Great Fire in 1666. His facile chisels were employed in many noblemens' seats such as Blenheim (Vanbrugh's architectural masterpiece), Chatsworth, Belton House near Grantham, Petworth, as well as the Admiralty Boardroom, and that now used by the New River Company.

It is impossible to render adequately the wealth of detail and commanding technique displayed in such examples as the stained limewood mirror frame, shown in the centre, which there is every reason for attributing to Gibbon. It is a veritable fairy jungle of natural objects, such as wheat, maize, hops, beans, peas, together with apples, plums, grapes, and other fruits, commingled with roses and poppies, vine acanthus, ivy, and other leafage; whilst laurel branches, strings of beads, and a group of shells, complete an almost bewildering abundance.

Some idea may be formed of the estimation in which Gibbon's work is held by connoisseurs, when one learns that for part of a panelled room bedecked with his carvings as much as £30,000 has been paid.

The long-case clock of walnut, with feathered reserves, whilst of good type, derives its chief interest from having been the property of the Rev. Charles Wesley. There is also some evidence of its having been made by one or more of the skilled craftsmen whom the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes drove in numbers to London, as well as to Norwich and other towns of England, and to the Netherlands.

Edwin Foley '09

WOODEN ANACHRONISMS

Obviously there are several degrees of "faking," or imitating. The piece in its entirety may be an absolutely modern copy of an old specimen: it may be a copy made so many years ago, that it has acquired a certain amount of *patina* and evidences of wear and tear: or it may be in part, genuinely of the period it purports.

It is not always wise hastily to condemn as a fraud, a piece of work of which the carving is not all of the same period. One should remember, for example, that the piece, if cupboard or *credence*, may originally have contained some undecorated panel or other space, which a subsequent owner may have desired the carver of his time to fill with contemporary ornament.

FINDS

Now and again in real life one reads of actual monetary discoveries in some old bureau or oak chest "which had long lain hid," and wonders whether the depositor died suddenly by the hand of foe or thief, or whether in sad nemesis for miserliness, memory failed him in his later years, so that he lived in want, knowing, mayhap, that he had somewhere secreted a hoard, and yet unable to locate it.

One surmises that the former fate befell Richard III., who one night at the end of July 1485, on preceding to Bosworth field, slept at the Blue Boar at Leicester. More than a century after, in Elizabethan days, a landlord of this hostelry suddenly rose from indigence to affluence. He maintained (to adopt somewhat the account based on local records given by Mr. Fred Roe in his interesting work on old coffers) prudent reserve upon the source of his fortune even to his wife. That lady, however, finding a gold piece drop out upon "making the bed" of an Elizabethan bed, pursued independent investigations so successfully as to discover a double bottom, which upon being forced was found "filled with gold, part

of it coined during the reign of Richard III., and the rest in earlier times." This money was bequeathed by the landlord to his wife: for its sake she was murdered by her maid-servant; whilst seven accomplices searched without success for her wealth, and were all hung for participation in the crime. Part of the bedstead credited with being Richard's secret money-box—and thus recalling

"Old unhappy far-off things
And battles long ago"—

is still extant, but, being indisputably Elizabethan in its details, obviously cannot have been in existence at the time, setting aside the companion absurdity of even a Plantagenet king carrying so unwieldy an addition to his furnishing baggage. The explanation is doubtless that the money was left by Richard in charge of guards innocent of its value, who fled upon hearing the fate of their master, and was transferred to this hidden receptacle more than a century later. Miss Strickland, indeed, in her picturesque, if at times inaccurate, *Lives of the Queens of England*, states that Richard carried a coffer upon which he slept. If this were so, it probably contained his treasure, and may well have held its secret for many a year, if provided with a cunningly contrived double bottom similar to that of the thirteenth-century painted Newport coffer (also described by Mr. Roe), with a removable crossbar turning in slots permitting the central part of the middle board to be removed, and an open space of two or three inches depth exposed to view. The Newport coffer has also a species of money-box. An exceptionally elaborate coffer, in the possession of Mr. Crofts, R.A., and dated 1653, is similarly furnished with two secret hiding-places.

Legs of bedsteads during Tudor times were hollowed out, a lid concealing the open space, whilst the overhanging frieze and cornice surmounting the court cupboard were also appreciated household banks for small articles in those days when banks and banking, in the modern acceptance of the terms, were not.

We know how favourite a device of the old romantic school of dramatists and novelists, was the old bureau with its hidden recess, disgorging the long-lost documents, restoring fame and fortune to heroine or hero, when both were at their lowest ebb. Whether the old piece be "Jacobean with curiously carved mouldings which effectually mask the hidden drawer," or of eighteenth-century craftsmanship,—and therefore concealing the papers behind pigeon-holes, or the hinged pilasters of "the fine old Georgian escritoire,"—is dependent upon the period of the plot. If the period be modern, there exists no real necessity for the introduction of the bureau with its mechanical contrivances, since the document may be deposited upon the top of the bookcase, secretaire, or wardrobe, with little fear of some zealous domestic, unversed in the *nuances* of domestic service, discovering it when dusting.

One smiles, mayhap, at the plotter's trite expedient, and is even inclined to be sceptical as to the existence of such mechanism, but hiding-places have in times past been (and even are nowadays) in demand, giving occasion for much ingenuity on the part of special workmen, of whom some exist to-day, learned in crafty expedients. "Restorers" of old pieces, when pursuing their renovations, do at times unearth overlooked *caches*: containing perchance a packet of old letters, pathetic with family secrets, and momentoes jealously preserved from a now icily insensible world: money and trinkets for which the restorer would doubtless be more grateful, are seldom among his finds.

SECRET DRAWERS

Oliver Wendell Holmes, speaking of "one of those old bureaus which were not rare during the eighteenth century," gives a curious instance of the possibility of secret drawers being so well contrived as to be unknown even to generations of owners.

"A boy of twelve . . . being a quick-witted fellow, saw that all the space was not accounted for by the small drawers beneath the lid of the desk. Prying about with busy eyes and fingers he at length came upon a spring, on pressing which a secret drawer flew from its hiding-place. It had never been opened but by the maker. The mahogany shavings and dust were lying in it, as when the artisan closed it, and when I saw it, it was as fresh as if that day finished."

In the troubled days of the Tudors and Stuarts, the skilful cunning of the woodworker was often combined with that of the mason, in contriving secret hiding-places for the master, as well as for his treasures. At Godinton, Bramhall Hall, and other mansions are such places. Doors indistinguishable from the rest of the wainscotting, and the panelled head-ends of beds, upon secret springs being pressed, opened and gave access to secret chambers. The very skill displayed was at times fatal to the occupant, if one may credit the melancholy story of the death of the Viscount Lovel, who took refuge in the family hiding-place when the adherents of Simnel, whose cause he had espoused, were defeated at the battle of Stoke. He remained safely secluded until his house and estates were seized by Henry VII., and the old servant who had supplied him with food was imprisoned, when, no one being left who knew the prisoner's whereabouts, he perished of hunger. Two hundred years later, when the house was pulled down, corroboration was given to this narrative by the discovery of the "remains of an immured being" in a small chamber "so secret, that the farmer who had inhabited the house knew it not," to adopt the phraseology of Andrews in his *History of Great Britain in* 1794.

FRAUDS

"Where pious frauds are dispensations."—HUDIBRAS.

The steady appreciation in value of old decorative furniture offers irresistible temptations to that lawful forger, the maker of pseudo antique woodwork.

There are many methods employed for

ENHANCING THE VALUE

of veritably old but plain examples of past furniture styles.

CARVING UP

It is an important weapon in the armoury of the "antique maker" to increase the value of plain but genuine old pieces, to ornament their surfaces with the detail of the period. Formerly the process revealed itself by incongruity or over-elaboration of detail, but the carver of to-day is more versed and restrained in styles, and often produces work instinct with the spirit of the past. Jacobean, Carolean, William and Mary, Anne and Chippendale furniture all lend themselves to carving up. Genuinely old pieces have their carving skilfully restored by lowering the ground.

The modern cheap copyist of Chippendale usually stints himself in the thickness of his wood, and is therefore unable to obtain the relief and depth of the original in his carving. No such complaint of undue reticence in use of fret-cut veneers glued together can, however, be made. He regards these as the hall-mark of Chippendale, and applies them to plain friezes, chair legs, and other vacant spaces (leaving their edges unfinished) with a prodigality undreamt-of by the master, whose fret-cut work was finished by the carver.

INLAYING AND VENEERING

are necessarily confined to old plain pieces of late Carolean, William or Anne, and to the periods identified with the brothers Adam, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton. The colour of pieces so treated usually betrays their modernity to the practised collector. However skilful the inlayer and polisher may be, the soft mellow tone effected by time cannot be attained, whilst the veneer used is seldom so rich yet subdued in tone—or so fine in figure—as the old mahogany or walnut.

IMITATING ADAM, HEPPLEWHITE, AND SHERATON

Over-elaboration is the pitfall of the imitator of these periods: he endeavours to atone for his inability to obtain the finely figured veneers of the originals, by lavish use of vases, *paterœ*, shells, lines, or other details of the typical style.

PAINTING

Old eighteenth-century cabinets, tables, and other examples of Adam, Hepplewhite, and Sheraton periods are refaced at times with satinwood veneer, and painted *à la* Angelica Kauffmann.

OTHER METHODS,

ingenious, but more reprehensible, of increasing the marketable value of an enriched piece or a modern replica, are to obtain a

PSEUDO PEDIGREE

connecting it with some noble mansion or family. Considerable astuteness is at times shown by unscrupulous dealers in pursuit of "a pedigree." In one authentic and recent case, certain pieces were

sold and delivered to a nobleman under a guarantee that they were genuinely Chippendale. A connoisseur friend of the purchaser quickly discovered that they were modern replicas, and the nobleman complained to the dealer from whom he had purchased the pieces. The dealer replied that, as he would experience no difficulty in selling at the price paid, he would take the pieces back, and would forward a cheque for the amount upon receipt. Delighted at the dealer's compliance, the nobleman wrote, "I have this day sent you the furniture, and will thank you for the cheque forthwith." The dealer sent the cheque and forwarded his lordship's letter to an American millionaire, together with a note—"You will see by the enclosed letter from Earl —— that some very exceptional examples of fine Chippendale have come into my possession from —— Castle;"—and aided by this "pedigree" sold the pieces at double the price given by the nobleman!

One hears also of old country houses—if "with a past," so much the better—being hired by antique dealers for a short term, and garnished with professedly antique furniture and equipments. The contents are then advertised, with an account of the history of the house and a feeling reference to the decay of an old county family necessitating the sale of its treasured heirlooms. Nor are tales wanting of unscrupulous dealers who suggest out-of-the-way places for the zealous collector's researches and "pepper" cottages and other likely spots thereat with forgeries for his discovery and acquisition.

WILES OF THE "FAKER"

The term "fake," thought by Professor Skeat to have been derived from the Middle Dutch *facken*, to catch, is well understood in that sense.

Though one assumes the fraudulent intent to be the gauge, no

endeavour will be made here to apportion the degree of blame, if any, attaching to "faking," nor to decide at what point the commendable loving reproduction of the choice old example becomes fraudulent.

New imitative pieces are sometimes painted and "pickled off" with potash, remains of the paint being left in corners to evidence its application.

In "furniture that is born old," the foot stretchers of chairs are whittled away to simulate wear by the feet of generations; otherwise genuinely old Chippendale chairs are supplied with the more admired carved cabriole legs in place of their original square legs. Possibly, also, the "faker" may rise to the height of a slight sham repair, in differently grained or coloured wood, to some little-seen part of the arms, stretchers, or back—to be pointed out to the customer by the retailer, probably himself deceived, as evidence of the genuine character of the specimen.

Too much has been made perhaps of

THE WORM-EATER

That new craftsman — whose existence, when disclosed by his wife's above definition of his calling and explanation that he was ill, provoked the judge's comment that he was not surprised—is not a feeder upon subterranean invertebrates, but an artist in deception, making a living by imitating in spuriously antique furniture the holes made in old walnut and other woods by wood worms. His work may be detected by inserting a pin—if the holes are straight, the "worm" was human; if crooked, the holes are by the invertebrate variety. The remarked tendency of worms to turn may thus be turned to account by the collector—whether or not he ascribes the tortuous course to professional jealousy of his human rival, on the part of the worm disguising itself in an altruistic desire to help the collector.

Worms spread over the whole piece are practically impossible to destroy, except by fuming in sealed chambers with sulphur. In chairs, tables, or other pieces required to bear weight, they are insidiously dangerous in their weakening effect.

As evidence of a certain degree of antiquity, worm-holes in furniture may be accepted. They have a greater partiality for walnut and chestnut; but pieces in which they exist should be avoided, for not only are they most undesirable adjuncts and usually evidence of inferior wood, but it is difficult to prevent their spreading over the piece.

IMITATING OLD CARVED OAK

The black-stained, cheap, antique oak, "ornately carved," deceives few nowadays—least of all when dated; such is the scepticism of human nature.

The colour of genuine old Stuart furniture is almost invariably warm, and differs radically from the dead tone of the black imitations. Its fine *patina*, mainly due to the influence of time upon not only the surface of the wood, but also upon the beeswax and turpentine with which the wood has been dressed and rubbed from the days of its manufacture, is better imitated by the brown fuming process.

TOOLS OF THE OLD CRAFTSMEN

To obtain the effects of the old woodworkers, continental copyists of old furniture, in the spirit of the true artist, are reputed to work only with copies of the old tools in use at the period of the piece they are replicating.

The French dealer in the antique, after simulating the present-day appearance of the old *ciseleurs'* works by biting the edges of his modern copies with sulphuric acid, pays London the compliment of sending

to it the finest imitations, that the fog and moisture may speedily give them an air of antiquity.

Antique furniture forgers seldom trouble to make the drawer "runners" of their pieces of broad grooves in the sides of the drawers running upon flanges fixed to the chest, preferring to use the modern and cheaper method of widening the drawer bottom.

Mouldings are a source of trouble to the would-be cheap forger; he is confronted with the fact that in imitating some of the styles he should work them out of the solid wood, not stick them on.

SOME NOTABLE SALE PRICES

The sale of a famed furniture collection has become an event vastly interesting both continents; multi-millionaires are represented thereat, and the man of dollars frequently outbids him of guineas. A few details anent notable prices realised by masterpieces of woodwork—French and English—will help the lay mind to grasp the potentialities of collecting *de luxe.*

At the sale of Prince Soltykoff's acquisitions a Burgundian cabinet *à deux corps,* carved with tritons, satyrs, and fruits, was disposed of for £650.

When Lord Amherst of Hackney's collection was under the hammer in 1908, a Louis XV. upholstered suite of seven pieces realised £7000, another set, made in the days of Louis Seize, being sold for the comparatively trifling sum of £1995, whilst a table in the same style was purchased for £2205. At the Ismay sale a Louis XVI. *suite* was sold for £1475.

More extravagant to the economical furnisher is the payment of £4600—made when the Cronier collection was disposed of in Paris —for a marqueterie writing-table, yet less than half the sum for which another writing piece—a secretaire—changed hands at Christie's, the exact price realised being £9475, ranking with the £15,750 for

which a connoisseur, willing and able to pay for costly household gods, obtained possession of the two fine marqueterie commodes previously in the Hornby Castle collection of the Duke of Leeds. Even these prices must yield precedence to the three *chefs d'œuvres* by Gouthière which realised £30,000 at the dispersal of the Hamilton collection.

Compared with the sums obtained for fine gallic *meubles de luxe*, the prices obtained for rare and fine old English furniture almost savour of inexpensive furnishing. To quote but a few: Eleven chairs at the Orrock sale were bought for £1800; a marqueterie cabinet, bearing the cipher G R, was sold for £503. Two carved Chippendale chairs at the Ismay sale changed owners at £1050, and a Chippendale "suite," consisting of three settees and five chairs, realised £1785.

PLATE XLIV

CARVED WALNUT DARBY AND JOAN SETTEE

The Property of Mr. N. C. Neill — Length, 4 ft. 10 in.; height, 3 ft. 3 in.; depth, 1 ft. 9 in. *Circa* 1725

The advent of Batavian proclivities which occurred even before William and Mary's arrival, by continuing the sequence and development of all-wood seats and settees, retarded the evolution of the more comfortable upholstered settees, so happily begun in the Knole settee (shown in Colour Plate XV.).

It must be confessed that the beauty of the Anglo-Dutch open-work settee is much greater than its comfort; indeed only by sitting almost "bolt upright" can the back of the sitter be rested.

Masks of the vulture and eagle, as well as that of the lion, were employed by the Queen Anne ornamentist as terminal carvings to the arms, in these picturesque "chair-back" settees, so called from the similitude of the pattern on their backs to connected chair-backs. A resemblance which, in consequence of their being so highly prized by connoisseurs, has led to imitations made up of chair-backs joined together.

Edwin Polley '09

CARVING BY GRINLING GIBBON, AT HOLME LACY.

THE WILLIAM AND ANNE PERIOD IN BRITISH DECORATIVE FURNITURE—1688-1727

WILLIAM AND MARY, 1688–1702. ANNE, 1702–1714. GEORGE I., 1714–1727

IF it were respectful to concoct names for venerable mobiliary modes after the fashion adapted for new "cure-alls," the very real difficulties of naming the interesting era now before us might be overcome by welding the first syllable of the above English rulers' names into some such horrific compound as Wimariangeo. But one dares not to seriously advocate such an uneuphonious and drastic innovation when even the use of the term "Orange" to designate this period of curvilinear Dutch proclivities is regarded as too radical for adoption.

To entitle the period the Walnut Age is scarcely more accurate than to rest content with the usual but inadequate term "Queen Anne," as walnut was in fairly general use both before and after this period.

The names of our kings and queens are preferable from their assistance in conjuring up mental pictures of their age in picturesque fashion.

Defying alike the present table of prohibited degrees and suspicions of our ignorance of the successions to the British Crown, we consequently have ventured to suggest the paper alliance of William and his sister-in-law and successor, Anne: the furniture introduced during the reign of the first of the Georges being understood as also included in the style.

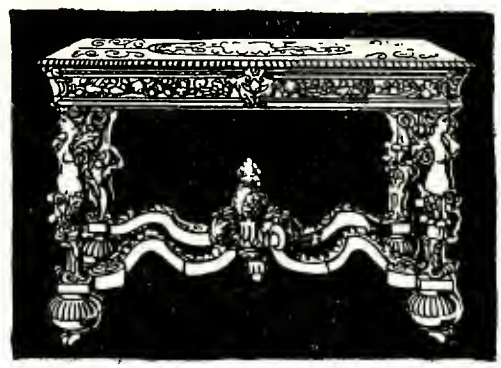
KING WILLIAM'S TRAVELLING CHEST.

Modern historians appear to be materially modifying Macaulay's black and white presentments of history. William of Orange is no longer the disinterested saviour of this country from Stuart misrule and Popery, nor England in 1688 a nation driven by despair to call in a foreign prince to save it from its own king, whilst the men who invited William of Orange over are shown by their letters (carefully saved by that prudent monarch for James II.'s inspection had matters gone awry) to have been no patriots sadly wrestling with their sense of allegiance to the misruling Stuarts, but ambitious schemers purchased by Dutch gold. A somewhat sordid tale, with its mad sad sequel of Jacobitism, and one which need never have been, had James's ministers been as patriotic as they were acute and selfishly ambitious.

SILVER REPOUSSÉ MIRROR. WINDSOR CASTLE.

One wonders what effect upon the furniture modes of this country the advent of a sensible man among the Jacobite leaders might have incidentally produced, when remembering that the national discontent with the Georges was, at almost any time

during the century succeeding the Revolution of 1688, at least as universal as that which was shown against the last Stuart who reigned. Upon the whole, William's accession probably benefited the development of English furniture design; the tastes of the Stuarts were so Italianate and effeminate, so much less in accord with the English temperament than were those of their sedate, comfort-loving successors that, had England remained under Stuart rule, the eighteenth century might never have evolved the sequence of native designers who interwove distinctly British individuality into their renderings even when most affected by French modes.



SILVER TABLE OF WILLIAM III. TOP ENGRAVED WITH ROYAL ARMS. WINDSOR CASTLE.

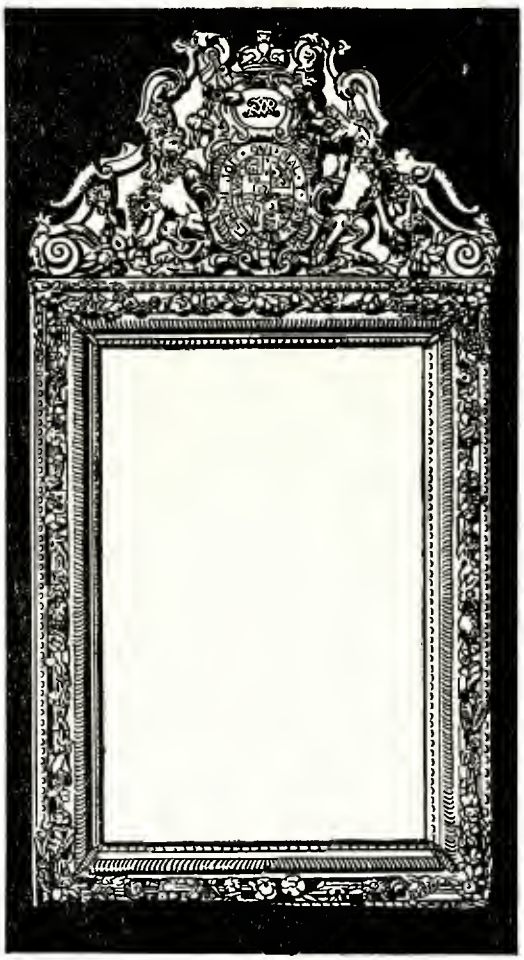
When William the Stadtholder arrived, he found an advance guard of Dutch workers and a pro-Dutch trend in taste awaiting him; indeed, a furniture stylist might almost as logically place at the head of the period we are now considering much of the furniture produced during the brief inglorious reign of James II., as place at its end the furniture produced during the first George's days.

DUTCH DOMINANCE IN DESIGN

doubtless was further accentuated by the more wealthy of William and Mary's Dutch courtiers importing the furniture of their own country, and by the English troops returning from the Continent with mobiliary momentoes of their campaigns.

With the accession of William and Mary, the straight constructional forms which had hitherto characterised English decorative furniture rapidly gave way to the ogee-curved and swelling out-

lines typical of Holland's contemporary styles. William, who did little to conceal his distaste for most things English, imported much furniture from his Dutch home, as well as commissioned his own artists, such as the Huguenot Daniel Marot, to design and make equipments for his new environment.



SILVER REPOUSSÉ MIRROR.
PRESENTED TO KING WILLIAM. WINDSOR CASTLE.

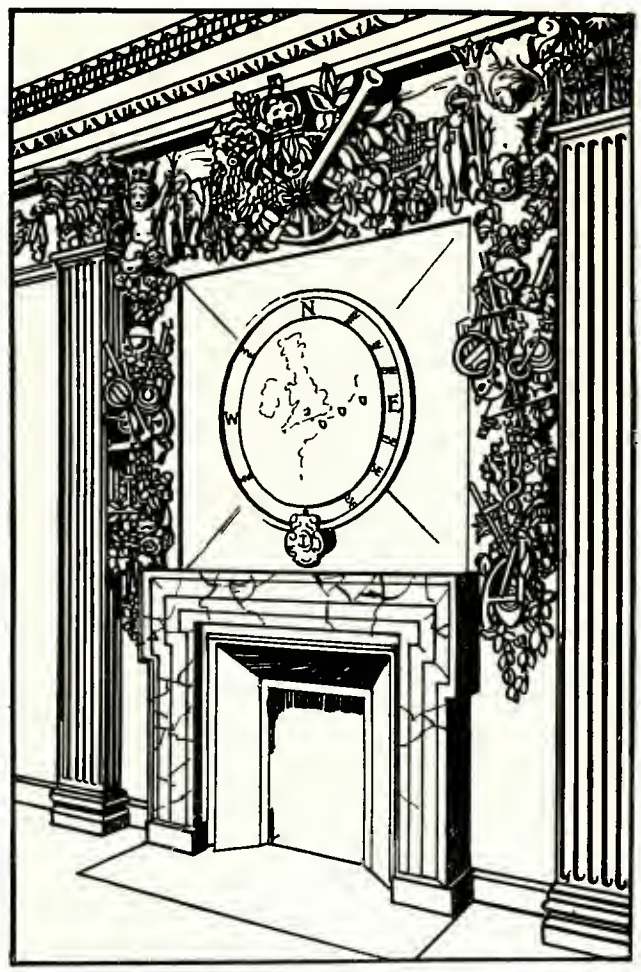
The revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which happened during the short reign of James the Second, was pregnant with material advantages to the applied arts and trades of Holland and England. Among the Huguenot refugees who fled to England were skilled joiners, carvers, and cabinet-makers, glass workers and silk weavers. They practised their arts and crafts, taught their apprentices and assistants, and undoubtedly helped to rear in England a school of craftsmen almost equal to those of France. To their influence is probably due some purely Gallic details to be found in William and Anne furniture, chiefly upon the mirrored frames.

Long ere the days of our Grinling Gibbon, the Italian carvers had availed themselves of the greater ease in working the finer, softer, and straighter-grained woods of the sycamore, pine, willow, lime, pear, and cedar, over not only the rugged oak and elm, but walnut, and even chestnut and cypress.

To lovers of woodwork arts and crafts the masterpieces of

GRINLING GIBBON,

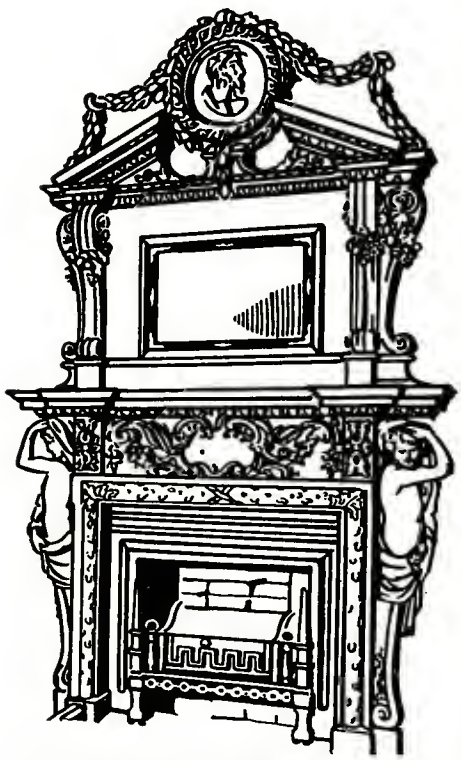
that Paganini in pear-tree and other soft woods who plied his chisels through the reigns of Charles II., James I., William and Mary, Queen Anne, and George I., are of dominating interest. The earlier history of Gibbon and his indebtedness to Evelyn during Stuart days have been noted. He was appointed, in 1714, master carver in wood to George the First, receiving the munificent retaining fee of eighteenpence a day during the remainder of his life. No carver knew better than Gibbon that wood needs humouring; if at times he may be justly blamed for a delicacy necessitating underpinning his work and inconsistent with strength, it was in no ignorance of the limitations of his material that he did so, for upon examining his work it is evident that each leaf, flower, tendril, and stalk was designed and carefully placed for cutting according to the grain. Beneath the seemingly happy carelessness with which (in Walpole's words) he "gave to wood the loose and airy lightness of flowers," was perfect command of his material and



BOARDROOM CHIMNEYPIECE. ADMIRALTY, WHITEHALL. ASCRIBED TO GRINLING GIBBON.

his tools. With stone, it must be confessed, he was less successful, disregarding at times its granular nature.

Gibbon worked only upon fixed woodwork, such as the panelling illustrated in Colour Plate XLIII. and the chimneypiece in the old boardroom of the Admiralty, Whitehall; this latter is quite worthy of Gibbon, but, inasmuch as he died in 1721, and the Admiralty building was not commenced by Ripley until 1726, one is forced to suppose that either the carving was prepared in advance, or that it was removed from some other building and adapted adroitly to its present position.



EARLY EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY CHIMNEYPIECE. STOKE HALL. ATTRIBUTED TO GRINLING GIBBON, BUT MORE PROBABLY OF ITALIAN DESIGN AND WORKMANSHIP.

Gibbon appears to have realised that his exquisite festoons, flowers, cupids, and other devices were too fragile and "dust-holding" in their full relief and undercutting for movable woodwork. As he did not carve furniture—unless one includes mirror frames—in a precise sense, Gibbon may not be included among the great artists of decorative furniture.

Much has been said by historians of architecture concerning

SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN'S

influence upon Grinling Gibbon; but may not Gibbon have exercised some upon Wren? Certain it is that at the disposal of Wren and his professional brethren was a craftsman such as England had never produced before.

PLATE XLV

INLAID WALNUT BOMBÉ BUREAU-CABINET

PARNHAM COLLECTION, BEAMINSTER

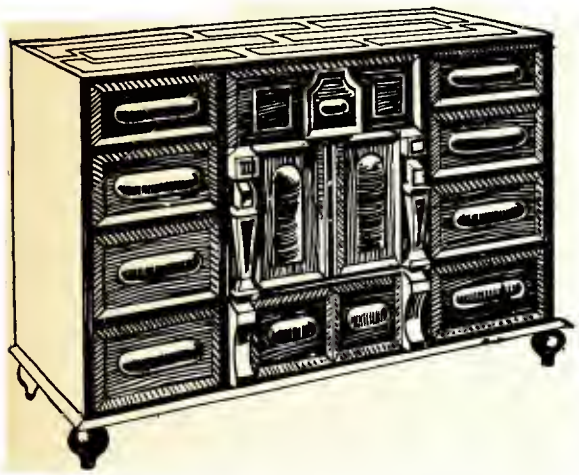
Depth of upper cupboard, 10 in.; width of upper cupboard, 2 ft. 8 in.; depth (over feet), 2 ft.; total height, 7 ft. 6 in.; width (over feet), 3 ft. 10 in. *Circa* 1725

QUEEN MARY is accused by Defoe, writing in 1724, in his *Tour through Great Britain,* of introducing "the custom or humour, as I may call it, of furnishing houses with china-ware, which increased to a strange degree afterwards, piling their china upon the tops of cabinets, scrutoires and even chimneypieces to the tops of the ceilings, and even setting up shelves for their china-ware." Daniel Marot, the Huguenot designer, —whose religious tenets caused him to leave his native soil and brought him into contact with William of Orange, for whom he designed much,—makes, in several of his illustrations, special provision for china.

This combination of bureau and china cupboard, distinctly unusual in the grace of the swelling outline in its lower part, was purchased by the late Mr. Vincent Robinson in Flanders and regarded by him as of early eighteenth-century parentage. The writer, whilst unwilling to dissent from so high an authority, would be disposed to place it a few years later. It is interesting to note that a very similar piece crossed the Atlantic and was for many years the property of Mrs. Pruyn of Albany.

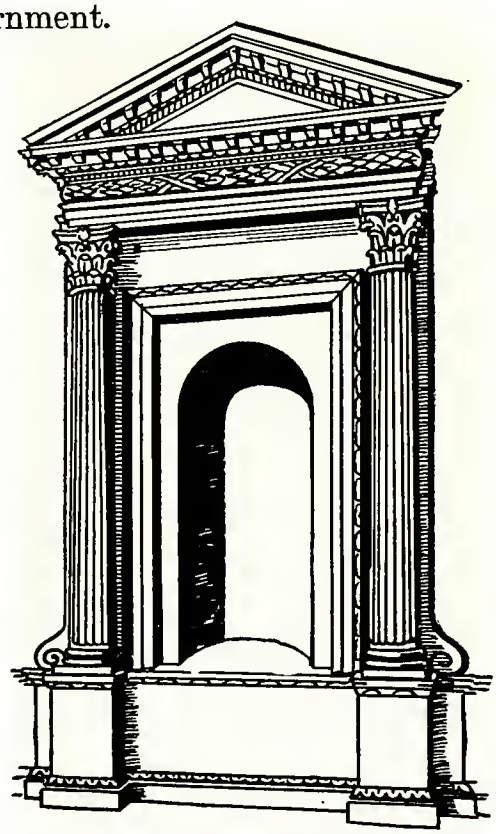
Edwin Foley '09

Many of the city churches built in Queen Anne's days to replace those destroyed by the Great Fire, contain examples of Gibbon's work, as does St. Paul's Cathedral. This noble building was commenced towards the end of Stuart days, and its last stone was laid by the architect's son in 1710. The same architect, master mason, and bishop presided over their respective departments during the whole period of its construction, and though one cannot add one master carver only, Gibbon's work added greatly to its adornment.



INLAID CABINET. PRESENTED TO SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN BY QUEEN ANNE. PROBABLY LATE STUART.

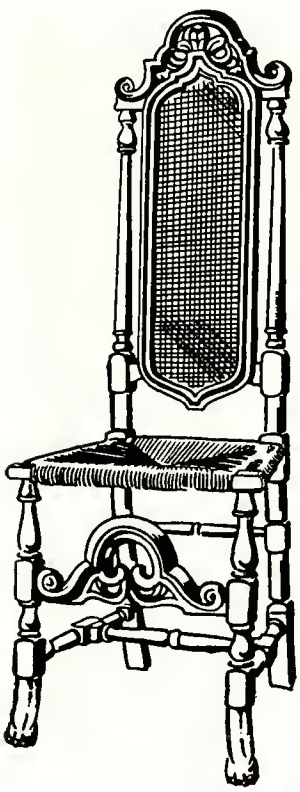
Wren was superseded in 1715 and died in 1723. One would have anticipated the exercise of an enormous influence upon the style and ornament of contemporary furniture by an architect who built fifty parish churches, in addition to St. Paul's, the noblest classic temple in Great Britain; the largest palace in Hampton Court, and the most architecturally sumptuous hospital in Greenwich Hospital. But whereas, curiously enough, until the last quarter of the seventeenth century furniture in England was almost invariably governed in its form or decoration—and frequently in both—by contemporary architecture, with the advent of Wren, Vanbrugh,



TYPICAL "TABERNACLE FRAME" AND DOMED NICHE. GEORGE I.

and their disciples the furniture of our country followed Dutch, Flemish, and Gallic developments, whilst the architecture became more akin to the stricter classic lines of Italian Renaissance.

Hawksmoor, Sir John Vanbrugh, Isaac Ware, James Gibb, Paine, Wood of Bath, the two Dances, and Sir Robert Taylor, are but some of the architects who, from this period and throughout Georgian days, designed for their buildings, door and "tabernacle" frames, panelling, and other interior wall decorations, blending Italian classic, Louis XIV., XV., and *rococo* details in the style known as "Georgian."



RUSH-SEAT, CANE BACKED. EARLY EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY CHAIR. SPANISH FOOT. SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM.

CRAFTSMEN

In addition to the French craftsmen who crossed over at the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, so many Flemish workmen were imported by our Dutch Deliverer and his Queen, that a piece of William and Anne furniture may either be the work of a Dutch craftsman working at home or in England, or of Englishmen influenced by the now omnipotent Batavian patterns.

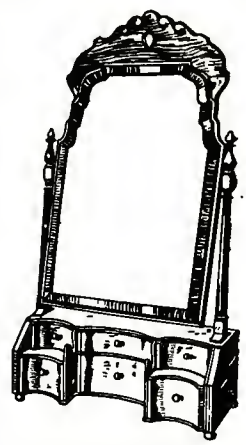
From the days of the Commonwealth the British cabinetmaker had shown increasing technical excellence. Reinforced by the imported Dutch and refugee French workmen, the craftsmanship of English furniture from the times of William and Mary is little, if at all, inferior to the best work of the Continent.

With the conclusion of the seventeenth century we also reach the termination of the period when English decorative woodwork—

partially in consequence of its practical limitation to the oak and other coarse-fibred woods—was coarse in comparison with the productions of Italy, France, and other continental nations using the finer-grained walnut, chestnut, pear, and other woods.

WOODS

Although oak, some chestnut, cedar, and other woods were used for constructional (carcase) or foundation work, the technical handicap imposed by the wood practically ceased during the days of William and Anne, when the vogue of walnut became almost as pronounced as that of oak had been at its height. Large numbers of walnut trees had been planted in the days of Queen Elizabeth, but more than half a century's growth is necessary before the centre or "heart" of the trunk is large enough. The grain of the English walnut is usually somewhat coarser and lighter in colour than that of continental varieties. The bulk of walnut furniture was veneered—probably as much upon deal as upon oak, though naturally more of the oaken pieces have survived.



QUEEN ANNE WALNUT TOILET-GLASS. *Property of* VISCOUNTESS WOLSELEY.

For veneer work burr walnut, acacia, olivewood, and laburnum were much employed.

Finely grained walnut logs were carefully set aside for veneering on oak.

We have noted the practice of bleaching walnut in order to heighten the contrasts which prevailed from the commencement of the pro-Dutch trend of taste, together with the introduction towards the conclusion of the Carolean period of the concentric or whorl-figured veneer work known as "oystered" from the resemblance of its grain to the appearance of the oyster shell. Its peculiar figure was obtained by slicing transversely the smaller limbs or boughs of

walnut, *lignum vitæ*, or the somewhat sickly-looking laburnum. During the period now under consideration it was greatly favoured.

Though mahogany, whose long reign we shall note in the next period, is stated to have been used for a chair made for William of Orange, it was not until about 1720 that it began to supplant walnut. Numerous examples exist, made from the new wood ere the close of George the First's reign.

The woods used in late Stuart marqueterie—pine, yew, pear, apple, cherry, holly, box, and ebony—were employed in conjunction with laburnum, olivewood, acacia, and sycamore in William and Anne times. Doubtless the Dutch importation of Eastern woods for inlaying purposes was stimulated by the English market.

INLAYING OR MARQUETERIE,

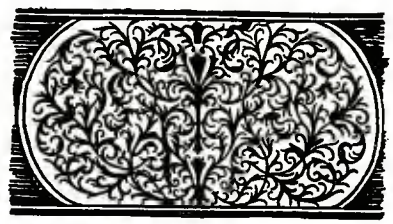
which continued in favour from Stuart days, merits more extended notice than has previously been necessary.

It may be unnecessary to premise that it is a process in which thin pieces of woods (veneer) are employed to obtain colour and pattern decoration. The process is so akin to veneering, that a few prior words here as to veneering may not be out of place. As far as it is used with a view to deceive the observer into the idea that he is beholding solid wood of a superior value, so far is it repellent. But when the choice is made upon obviously decorative grounds, then veneering in its many forms yields legitimate results, both by contrasting the grain, by arranging such pieces in radiating forms, and by employing small pieces of woods cut in a peculiar way as in "oystering."

WALNUT INLAID TABLE. EBONY GROUND TO INLAID PANELS. LATE STUART OR EARLY WILLIAM AND ANNE.

Perhaps the best definition of the differences between inlaying and veneering, would be to describe inlay as patterning of various coloured woods let into the solid panel or groundwork of a piece of furniture, and marqueterie as patterning let into an equally thin groundwork, the completed work (both pattern and ground) then being applied to cover the surface of the part to be decorated.

Cross-banding, feather-edging, and herring-boning were used upon bureaus, chests, and grandsire clocks—which, indeed, as we shall see, were especially favoured in the evolving of the different modes of inlaying. A characteristic feature of both William and Anne marqueterie was its enclosure (reserving) in panels outlined by parts of circles, frequently combined with oblongs having rounded ends, the grounds of these panels being of differently coloured wood to that of the rest of the piece.



SEAWEED PATTERN UPON SIR GEORGE DONALDSON'S WRITING-TABLE (COLOUR PLATE XLVII.)

The introduction of both the acanthus and the flower patterns into smooth-surfaced English ornament at this period was doubtless by way of Holland. Especially may we be sure that the tulip details are of Dutch provenance, as were also the parrot or cockatoo bird inlays—another result of the Dutch intercourse with the East. It may fairly be claimed that English marqueterie of this period was more delicate in both conception and execution than its Dutch prototype.

The Dutch and other continental treatment of the acanthus in inlaying was more "spiky," complicated, and shaded than the English.

Ere the end of William and Mary's reign, the acanthus had largely displaced the flowers and leaves of late Stuart days, and was in its turn being supplanted by the charmingly delicate so-called "seaweed" or "spider's web" patternings—such as that forming the sole and sufficing decoration upon Sir George Donaldson's

writing-table in Colour Plate XLVII.—which continued during the succeeding reign. From the accession of Queen Anne, marqueterie fell into comparative disuse, in common with other enrichments.

Did Englishmen or Dutchmen execute the greater part of the fine marqueterie made in England at this period, or are the skilled Huguenot refugee craftsmen who found homes and welcome in England, and assisted to found the eighteenth-century school of British decorative woodworkers, to be credited with any large proportion of the work? One certainly finds panels of decidedly French inspiration upon pieces of decorative furniture throughout the period covered by the reigns of William and Mary, Queen Anne, and George I.

PLATE XLVI

QUEEN ANNE'S BED

HAMPTON COURT PALACE — Height, 19 ft. 4 in.; length, 7 ft. 2 in.; width, 8 ft. 4 in.

CHEST OF DRAWERS UPON STAND

Property of VISCOUNTESS WOLSELEY

WOODEN CANDELABRA

Property of SIR SPENCER PONSONBY FANE

THE enormous height to which State and other upholstered beds quickly grew after their inception in Louis Treize days, dwarfed other equipments of the apartment to an even greater extent than is represented in this plate.

The typical upholstered bed of William and Mary and Queen Anne days was composed, as to its draperies, of heavy curtains concealing the posts at each corner; and was draped at the head end. It possessed, moreover, *vallains*, synonymous with our present-day valances; *basses*, the current term for the side valances which conceal the space beneath the bed; and *bonegraces*, fixed curtains protecting the sleeper from possibility of draught coming between the side curtains and those at the back.

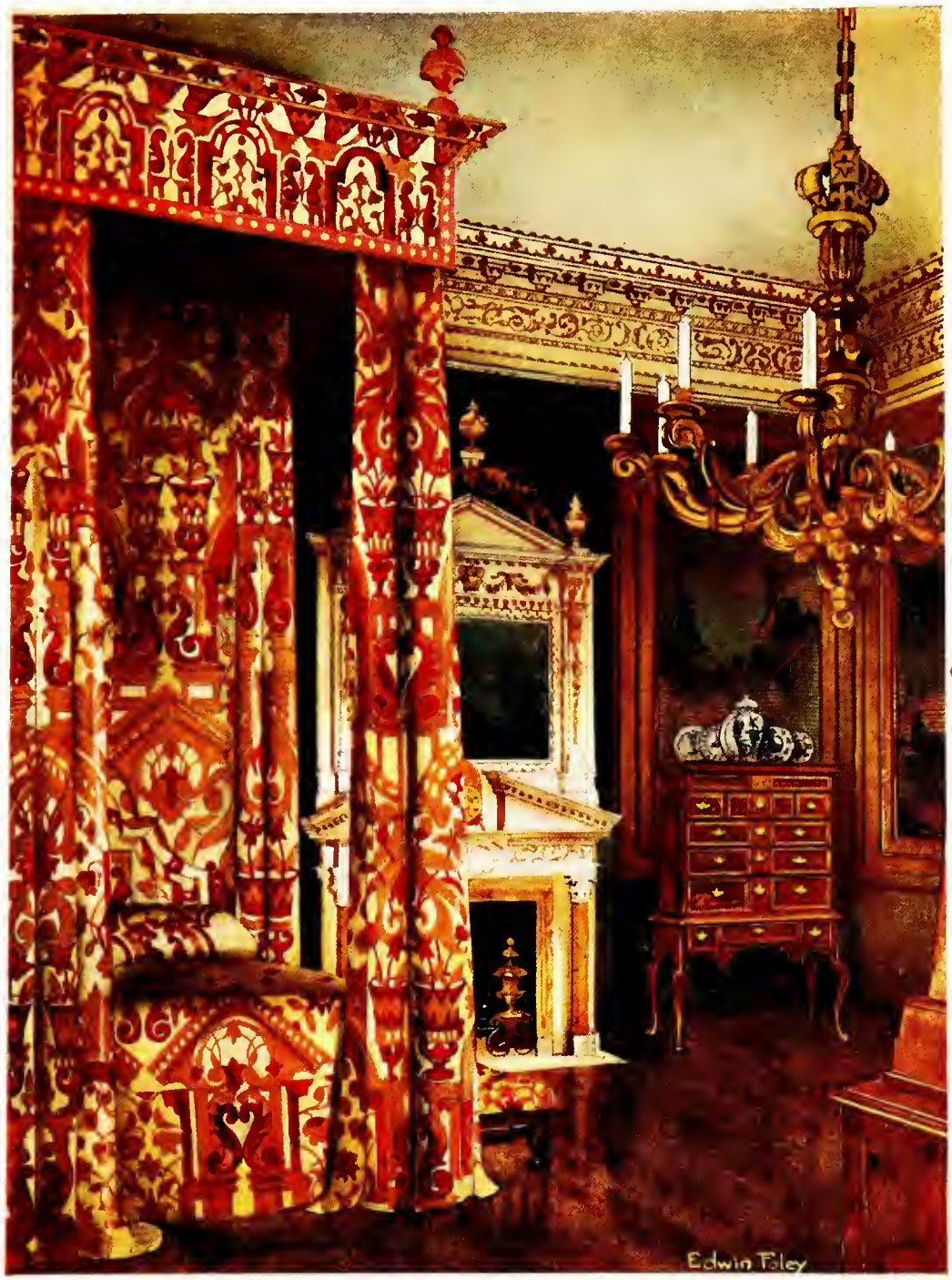
During our William and Anne period, chintzes were largely employed for curtaining the bed; velvets, silks, and needleworked tapestries being usually reserved for the more important pieces. These velvet draperies are usually attributed to the colony of

Huguenot weavers who found asylum in Spitalfields, and were subsidised by the Government.

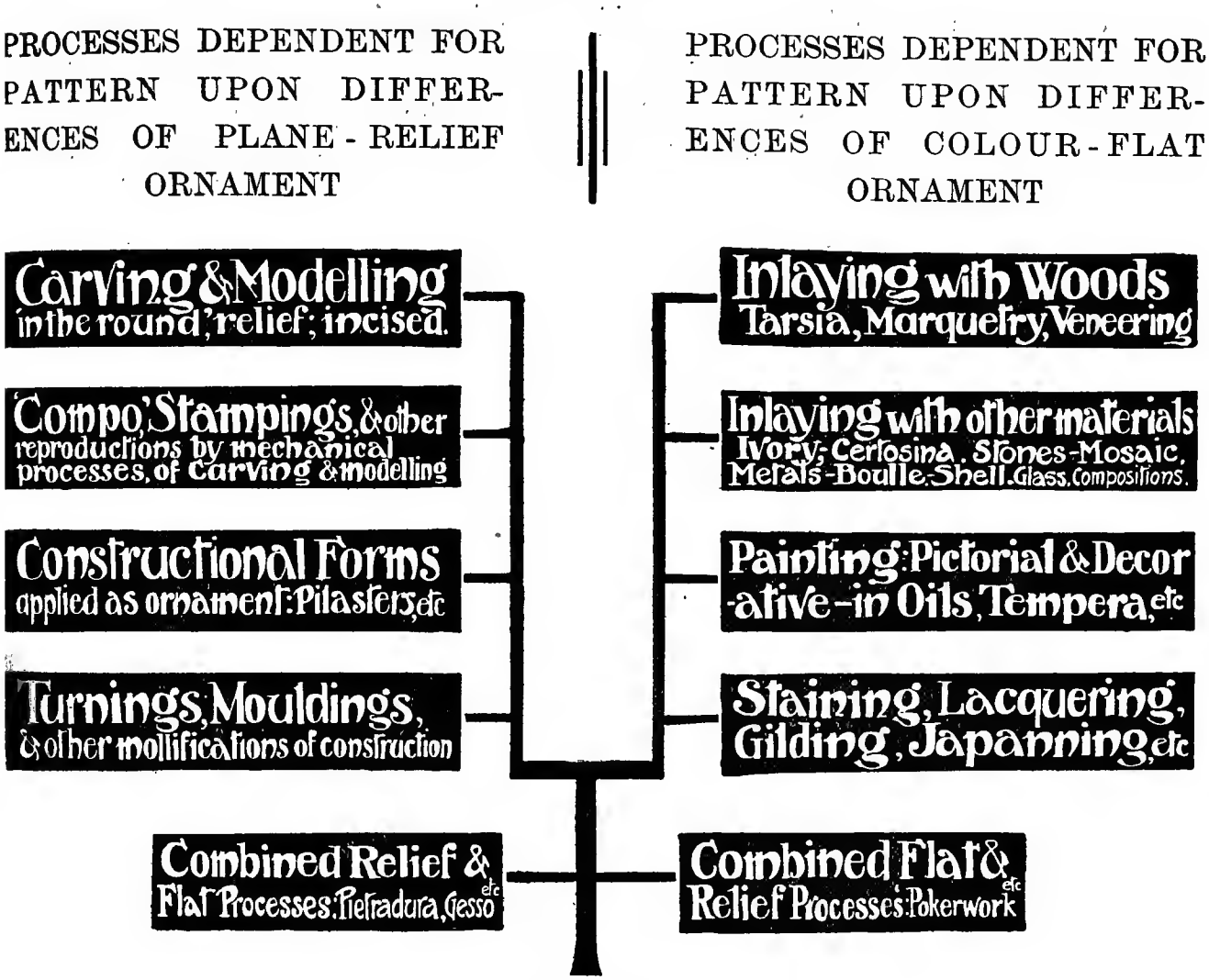
They transplanted their craft so successfully that England, at the close of the seventeenth century, found it practicable to prohibit foreign silks, which she had imported a few years previously to the value of nearly a quarter of a million pounds sterling.

Chests of drawers, mounted upon stands of similar type to that illustrated, were developing during the period. Such chests usually relied for their decoration upon figured veneers of walnut and cross-banded borders.

Wooden candelabra, such as those possessed by Sir Spencer Ponsonby Fane (believed to have been formerly at Kensington Palace), were made during the early years of Queen Anne's reign; and though having but little illuminative capacity, were graceful departures from their metal forerunners.


Edwin Foley

MODES OF ORNAMENT IN DECORATIVE FURNITURE


PROCESSES DEPENDENT FOR PATTERN UPON DIFFERENCES OF PLANE-RELIEF ORNAMENT
PROCESSES DEPENDENT FOR PATTERN UPON DIFFERENCES OF COLOUR-FLAT ORNAMENT
Carving & Modelling in the round; relief; incised.
Compo, Stampings, & other reproductions by mechanical processes, of Carving & modelling
Constructional Forms applied as ornament: Pilasters, etc
Turnings, Mouldings, & other modifications of construction
Inlaying with Woods Tarsia, Marquetry, Veneering
Inlaying with other materials Ivory, Cerosina, Stones-Mosaic, Metals-Boulle, Shell, Glass, Compositions.
Painting: Pictorial & Decorative-in Oils, Tempera, etc
Staining, Lacquering, Gilding, Japanning, etc
Combined Relief & Flat Processes: Pietradura, Gesso etc
Combined Flat & Relief Processes: Pokerwork etc

One old chair and half a candle,
One old jug without a handle,
In the middle of the woods
These were all the worldly goods
Of the Yongby Bongby Bo.

WERE mankind satisfied with the meagre furnishings of Mr. Lear's conception, this chapter, indeed this book, would be needless. Few, however, much as they may appreciate the French Wagnerian theme of the Simple Life, can avoid encouraging

those phases of the æsthetic instinct which find expression in the elaboration as well as the beautifying of home furnishings.

Without attempting to enter in detail into the history of the arts of architecture, sculpture, and painting, to which decorative furniture, in common with the other applied arts, owes so much, some account of the methods of ornament will greatly assist in both comprehending and appreciating the appeal of beautiful furniture.

The subject is by no mean "dry," even to the designer—whose love of the art and mystery of his craft makes him prone to regard both as sacrosanct from explanation, and whose best work is certainly usually too intuitive for his own analysis.

The stream of ornamental woodwork running into the ocean of design (to embark upon the hazardous waters of metaphor), is composed of two main rivers,

RELIEF AND FLAT ORNAMENT,

with their contributory rivulets, their joined waters forming two further streams, as shown on the diagram heading this chapter. By its aid it will be seen that the complete tabulation of the

ORNAMENT OF DECORATIVE FURNITURE

is as follows:—

(1) That dependent on differences of *plane* between ground and pattern or

RELIEF ORNAMENT

consisting of:—

A. Carving, Sculpture, or Modelling: "In the Round" Relief, Incised, or Engraved.

B. Reproductions of carving or modelling by mechanical processes and plaster compositions, Carton-Pierre, Papier Mâché, Stampings, Appliqué Work, Castings, Metal Mounts, Ormolu, etc.

C. Constructional forms applied as ornamental details: Pilasters, Arches, Columns, Shapings, Brackets, Frets, Lattice-work, etc.

D. Turnings, Mouldings, and other mollifications of constructional work.

(2) That dependent upon differences of *colour* between ground and pattern or

FLAT ORNAMENT

comprising: —

A. Inlaying with Wood: Marqueterie, or Tarsia: Tonbridge Work, Veneering, Banding.

B. Pictorial and Decorative Painting, flat pattern: Graining, Staining, and Gilding, Lacquering, Japanning, Vernis Martin, etc.

C. Inlaying in other materials: Ivory, Bone, Shells (Mother-of-pearl, Tortoiseshell, etc.), Precious Stones, Marble, etc. (Mosaic), Composition, Metals, Damascening, Piqué, Gold Silver and Brass with tortoiseshell (Boullework, etc.).

(3) Combinations of

RELIEF WITH FLAT ORNAMENT

such as:—

A. Gesso or artificially coloured raised carton-pierre or other plaster composition.

B. Raised, carved, painted, gilt, or lacquered work.

C. Pietra dura, or naturally coloured marbles in relief.

D. "Pokerwork" or artificially coloured (burnt) sunk pattern in wood.

CARVING

Carving is the chief and oldest of applied art processes, practised from the remotest days—no race being found ignorant of at least its rudiments. The Byzantines carried, every man, a staff whose ivory head was delicately carved. Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, mediævalists and modern races alike have loved and used it.

When detached from a background it is said to be "in the round," as in figure, sculpture, and other "free" ornamental work.

When upon a background it is said to be "in relief," and upon its height from the background depends whether it is in "high relief" or in "low relief." If sunk below the surface it is known as incised—doubtless the very oldest form of ornamenting woodwork and practised invariably first by primitive races. A simple combination of both raised and sunk methods is that in which the pattern is formed entirely by the sinking of the ground as in much Egyptian, Celtic, Tudor, and Jacobean work.

Ornament being necessarily tinged with the manners of its designer's soul and environment, under the rule of the monk reflected the Gothic details of the cloister and the church with the naïve, sturdy crudity characteristic of mediæval thought, and suiting well the stubborn grain of the oak. So deeply rooted was the Gothic tradition, that the entry of the Renaissance forms affected but slowly the ideas and methods of the early Tudor carvers in England, but in contemporary Italian work and in the schools of Southern France, such as Lyons, Toulouse, and Auvergne, which followed their Italian neighbours, the line was clean as well as boldly undercut, that it might be crisply displayed. In Northern France and Burgundy, the carvers,

while retaining the vigour of the Gothic craftsmen, gradually added a love and mastery of technique. Though the coarser execution of Northern French work, in common with that of England, was in part due to the continued use by both of the oak,—a wood not yielding itself so willingly to the tool as the finer grained walnut or chestnut used in Italy, Spain, and in Southern France more than in Northern France,—much must also be ascribed to the temperamental differences between the men of the north and those of the south.

One is more inclined to attribute to the old workers disinterested love of their arts-crafts, when forgetting the difference in the purchasing power of money in their days and in our own. We read, for example, that Conrad of Mechlin, state carver to Margaret of Austria, was paid five sous a day, another carver, the chief cook, receiving twenty-five; even such by no means munificent sums, compare favourably with that paid to thirteenth-century Gothic carvers and masons, who, working at Salisbury Cathedral, received one farthing per day, the same as other workmen, a rate of pay commemorated by a street in the town, still bearing the name Pennyfarthing Street. In the same city, too, in a porch of the Church of St. Thomas, may be seen the work of the earliest English carver, of whom definite memorial exists; a woodcarving in relief, illustrating the Sacrifice of Isaac, and Jacob's Dream, with attendant cherubs and satyrs, the work and monument of one, Humphrey Peckham, an inscription recording whose death in 1671, being affixed. Another and mightier Carolean carver, not long after Humphrey Peckham in point of time, and infinitely superior in skill and taste, was Grinling Gibbon, whose work first placed English carvers upon an equality with those of the Continent. Did he see the diptyches, triptyches, and rosary beads of boxwood crowded with figures representing Biblical scenes in a space of some two or three inches: marvels of minute technique executed by the Flemish and French carvers of the fifteenth or sixteenth century? If so, how he must have delighted in them. He would

have been equally charmed with the marvellous skill of his contemporaries, the far-off Japanese wood-craftsmen, in carving frogs, rats, and other animal forms.

Carving has been defined as sculpture in wood, and sculpture as carving in stone: the material, position, and purpose creating the distinction.

REPRODUCTIONS BY MECHANICAL PROCESSES OF CARVING AND MODELLING

The use of mechanical methods of reproducing in quantities patterns in relief is comparatively modern.

Carton-pierre, the best known and most typical of the compositions evolved in Italy about the middle of the eighteenth century, as a result of hundreds of years of experimental work on the part of the plaster-workers of that land, is cast in moulds and built up around a wire frame, or applied to flat or curved surfaces. It is associated in England chiefly with the Brothers Adam, who introduced the process and Italian workers to Great Britain, and strove to retain a monopoly.

Of even more recent invention are the stamping and carving machines, which now aid in the production of panels by the thousand, with a mechanical accuracy making one long for the imperfection of the rudest, crudest piece of handwork.

Architecture, the queen-mother of the fine and applied arts, which has both provided the house and trained its offspring, has dominated the form and ornament of furniture. Perhaps the least defensible form of ornament is that in which its

CONSTRUCTIONAL FORMS

are applied for entirely ornamental purposes. It took deeper root upon the Continent than in this country. Indeed the vogue in Britain

for facing furniture (as in the Southwark Muniment Chest, Colour Plate VII.), with architectural frontages based on the façades of Renaissance buildings, with their pilasters, columns, pediments, and other details, did not again assume prominence in Britain until the pseudo-Gothic and other revivals at about the junction of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Especially foolish, regarded solely from the point of view of truth, is the use of the applied arch in woodwork ornament.

It has been well said that the arch never sleeps; that, whether of stone or brick, pointed or round, it is a living constructional entity in building; in decorative furniture it is constructionally unnecessary, and a patent sham. Wood can readily be obtained to support weights and span spaces far in excess of those obtaining in furniture, even did the fibrous nature of wood not render it unsuitable for the arch, since some part of the strain must necessarily be against the grain. The wooden arch therefore survives as a piece of decoration, deriving its æsthetic value in our eyes largely from the formation of the taste by architecture.

TURNINGS, MOULDINGS, AND OTHER SOFTENINGS OF CONSTRUCTIONAL FORM

The father of the moulding was the dripstone; in other words, the moulding originated in the discovery that sharp overhanging projections assisted to protect from damp. Turning, as we have seen, is of the most venerable antiquity, and has been used by almost all races with any claims to have risen above mere savagery.

INLAYING

Among modes of ornament inlaying is of an antiquity secondary only to carving and painting. The Egyptians, Assyrians, and Babylonians

were well acquainted with its processes; in their earliest existing examples ivory, ebony, and vitreous compositions are used upon wood.

Homer, Pindar, and other writers, it will be remembered, more than once refer to the art in descriptions of Greek and Roman ornamented furniture.

Inlaying in its many forms, would appear to have suffered least from the partial eclipse of the applied arts during the Middle Ages. In Italy from the thirteenth century it was revived. Mainly by the efforts of the cloistered workers in that country, it attained (especially upon fixed woodwork), by the sixteenth century, a technical eminence surpassed only by the French *marqueteurs* of the eighteenth century.

Early Italian inlay was of geometrical design, but towards the beginning of the sixteenth century figurework and perspective designs with much bolder treatment were evolved by the use of comparatively large pieces of cypress and pine, to obtain contrasts and shaded effects.

The introduction of fine inlaid work,—in which, by the middle of the sixteenth century, English workers had attained considerable technical proficiency, as well as some distinctive character in design—by adding the natural wood to the resources of colour without recourse to painting gave a medium enduring as long as the piece, and practically indestructibly ornamented, and assisted the craftsman to dispense with imitations of constructional details for ornamental purposes.

The simple geometrical forms inlet by early Tudor craftsmen developed, as has been seen, into more ambitious semi-arabesques floral, and semi-pictorial forms, such as those upon the Offley Chest in Plate VII. During Stuart days and those of William of Orange and of Queen Anne proficiency was reached little less than that of contemporary continental work.

PLATE XLVII

WALNUT INLAID WRITING-TABLE

The Property of Sir George Donaldson — Length, 4 ft. 5 in.; height, 3 ft. 4½ in.

The kneehole writing-table, with enclosed centre, made its appearance in England towards the end of the seventeenth century, some few years after Boulle had clothed its form in his metal inlays—of which the Versailles piece (illustrated in Colour Plate No. XLII.) is perhaps the finest example.

The bleached walnut veneer, forming the ground of Sir George Donaldson's table (upon deal mainly), is of exceptionally good figure; the workmanship also is far more delicate than is usual at this period in Britain. When the top, which is hinged in the centre, falls back, it releases the fall-down flap for use when writing. The central recess or "kneehole" is somewhat too shallow for comfort, being partly occupied by drawers enclosed by a door.

Minutely arabesqued marqueterie leaf and stalk work—variously entitled "Seaweed," and "Cobweb," or "Spiderweb," characteristic of William and Mary days, but falling into disuse ere the advent of Chippendale—is almost invariably of fine craftsmanship.

Equally characteristic is its reservation in panels wholly or partly composed of parts of circles; the counter-change of colour in ground and pattern adding greatly to the effectiveness. The bull's-nose moulding mitreing upon the framing is inlaid, as are also the borders of the drawers and doors, in sandburnt laurelling.

Edwin Foley 1919

Inlaying in mother-of-pearl, bone, and ebony, of hispano-moresque detail, which prevailed from about 1625, was, as we have seen, interrupted by the Civil War and Commonwealth, to revive during Charles the Second's days, almost invariably upon walnut furniture, frequently upon an ebony reserved ground with floral and bird ornament. Formal at first but freer later, with green leaves and colouring of Dutch derivation, and bearing traces of tulipomania and Eastern parrot forms, it continued through James II. days, and was further developed during the next period; being in the author's opinion, distinctly the most interesting in the annals of English inlaid work. Much of the marqueterie of William and Mary's days, was, however, undoubtedly by foreign craftsmen resident in England.

THE ACANTHUS

Reference must no longer be delayed to this lord of leafage decorative. The legend anent the first step of the acanthus to ornamental fame, runs that once upon a very ancient time a vase was thrown upon a maiden's grave, whereon had grown a wild acanthus plant, and that the acanthus, in its struggle for light and air, curled itself so pleasingly round the vase as to inspire the heart and chisel of a Hellenic carver, Kallimachus, the maiden's lover by name, with the idea for that most refined of classic capitals, the Corinthian; thus giving the acanthus an entry into the world of applied art which was to end in its leafage becoming the most widely known in the whole range of architectural ornament. Indeed, the Vicar of Bray might well have adopted its outlines as his device, for its treatment of the vase was but a foretaste of its treatment of the styles. From ancient Greek to Sheraton the acanthus has curled itself round every mode within reach of its scrolls (one had almost written tentacles), permitting

every species of liberty and caricature to its delineators, provided it be but chosen as the model. Beautiful as is the acanthus, its flexibility is even more pronounced, and herein lies the secret of its dominance throughout the classic modes and their offspring.

From Queen Anne's days until those of Sheraton the art of inlay was neglected, and indeed upon the whole it cannot be claimed that this country has contributed greatly to the world's wealth of beautiful inlaid woodwork.

VENEERING

At the other extreme of decorative ornament produced by *laminæ* inserted into construction are those of veneering. Much has been written depreciative of this method, but it should be remembered, in defence of veneering, that the decorative effects of contrasting and reversing figured woods might be impracticable in the solid, as very many of the most delightfully figured and coloured woods are obtainable only in pieces far too small to use in the solid. The boundaries dividing inlay from veneering are difficult to define, but the difference may be expressed by stating that inlaid work depends in its appeal upon its differences of colour and the outline given it by pattern, whilst in veneering the dependence is upon the grain of the wood.

INLAYING IN OTHER MATERIALS

Mosaic work is of antiquity second to none of the decorative processes. To confine ourselves to comparatively modern days it will be remembered that from the period of Henri II. (*circa* 1550), mosaic work had been used by the Florentines and Milanese upon decorative furniture.

PLATE XLVIII

RED AND GILT LACQUER DOUBLE CHEST OF DRAWERS

Property of Viscountess Wolseley

Height, 5 ft.; width, 3 ft. 4 in.; depth, 1 ft. 11 in.

Lacquer, the wonderful coloured and frequently opaque varnish applied to metals and wood, in which the artistic and manipulative skill of the Chinese and Japanese have found characteristic expression, doubtless was first introduced into Great Britain by returning mariners, anxious to present their friends with curios from the strange lands across the seas. It would be difficult to state the date of the first appearance of specimens in these islands. Some few pieces were possibly among the valued curios from far earlier days than those of Henry VII., when Spain and Portugal had established almost a monopoly of trade in Asiatic waters.

More than one Elizabethan chronicle refers to the Indian Cabinet. It was not, however, until the marriage of the Infanta Catharine, the King of Portugal's sister, to Charles II. in 1662, bringing with it the cession of Bombay as part of her dowry, that English commerce with the East became prosperous, and from that date British traders would seem to have steadily increased their trade with the Indies, although the proportion of lacquer work they carried home was probably small; Holland retaining command of the trade and producing much herself until at least the days of George I.

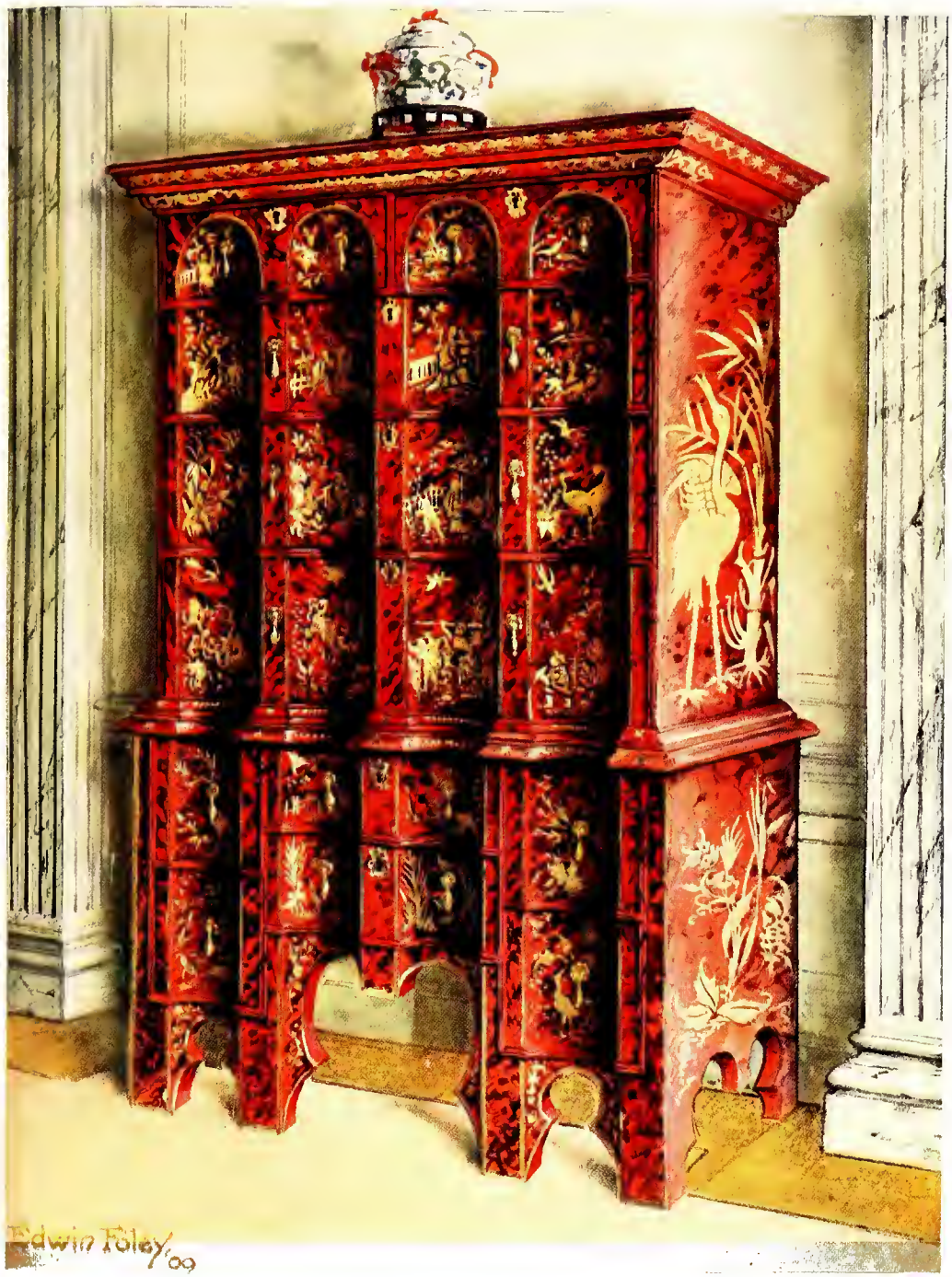
One encounters many references to "Japan" work and "the Indian taste" in chronicles of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Evelyn, for example, in his *Diary* under date of July 1682, mentions *apropos* of a visit to "our good neighbour Mr. Bohun, whose whole house is a cabinet of elegancies, especially Indian," that "in the hall are contrivances of Japan screens instead of wainscot. . . . The landscapes of the screens represent the manner of living and country of the Chinese."

Though English and continental lacquer did not attain either the smoothness or the brilliancy of the Oriental, European pieces such as Lady Wolseley's double chest are interesting both on account of their quaint Western interpretation of the Eastern arts, and because they afford scope for conjecture, whether Holland or England was their land of birth.

The first manufacture of lacquered work in England was towards the end of the seventeenth century.

Until about 1760 the designs for lacquer work upon European decorative furniture were Eastern in character, consisting chiefly of pagodas, Oriental figures, birds and fishes, trees, flowers, and fruit arranged in imitation of Oriental concepts, but little likely to deceive those possessed of even the most elementary acquaintance with the applied arts of the East.


Edwin Foley '09

To Milan is usually attributed the inception of the ivory and ebony furniture in which Flanders and Italy were pre-eminent, and of the seventeenth century walnut pieces. The latter were inlaid with the minute geometrical patterns of bone and ivory, known as

CERTOSINA,

from its first European workers being Carthusian monks. They, probably, were indebted to the more ancient Eastern *piqué* for their method. The old chessboards — those marvels of minute patience whereon thousands of almost microscopic cubes are patiently pieced together — are among the most remarkable specimens of this type of work.

In "Tonbridge ware" the English derivative of *certosina* and *pique* inlaying, the ornament is obtained by sawing off thin *laminæ* from sticks formed of glued-together rods, disposed in a pattern, usually of geometrical character.

Damascening derives its name from Damascus, and concerns itself with the producing of ornaments upon metal surfaces, either by etching or by filling up engraved lines in the metal with gold or silver wire. It is applied to furniture in the form of panels, smaller pieces of furniture, such as mirrors, being at times made entirely of metal and enriched with damascening.

PAINTING

That wooden furniture was painted and gilt in the land of the Pharaohs we know from such extant fragments as the throne of Queen Hatshepsu. Its use from that remote past to modern times has been persistent.

LACQUER

Much uncertainty exists relative to the date and country and origin of lacquer, but the invention of this—the most beautiful and distinctive of the Eastern decorative arts—has been claimed both by China and Japan. That the balance of evidence inclines towards Chinese priority in the invention of lac is now practically admitted by Japanese experts, despite the fact that a "Chief of the Imperial Lacquer Department" is stated to be mentioned in old Japanese records as long ago as 392 B.C.

It appears less probable that the Japanese independently discovered than that they borrowed this in common with almost all their art industries from China after their expedition to Korea in the third century. That the Land of the Rising Sun developed the art of lacquering to a degree greatly transcending the finest Chinese work is incontestible, even with the evidence of the specimens which make their way into Europe, and inadequately as these represent the unpurchasable *chefs d'œuvres* treasured in the homes of the Japanese nobility.

The recipe for the manufacture of the fine pure white lacquer of the fifteenth century has been lost, but as many as twenty or thirty tints of black, yellow, red, brown, green, gold, silver, copper, and other colours and metals are manufactured.

One must not omit to mention the most curious of the many uses to which lac is put in the East. The Oriental, having ornamented his other household goods and chattels by its aid, employs it to disfigure, by staining, the teeth of his wife, that she — ever beautiful in her husband's eyes—may not extend the sphere of her conquests.

Perhaps the most artistic as well as the most interesting of the

COMBINED RELIEF AND FLAT PROCESSES

are *Gesso*—in which raised plaster composition is painted and gilt—and *pietra dura*, a mosaic raised inlay composed of precious stones, agates, jaspers, etc., chiefly of Italian (Florentine) work, and greatly in favour during the seventeenth century.

POKERWORK

is so well known a modern amateur decorative process that any description would be superfluous; it should, however, be borne in mind that quite artistic effects were obtained in other days by its use.

It is well to recognise that the invention and development alike of the vast variety of ornamental methods, has been, in the main, the work of the craftsman. The British designer is of modern growth, and, with the modern architect, is less the descendant of the practical mediæval workman than of the artist and literary student, who, with little technical or workshop training, travelled the Continent notebook in hand, and often at a patron's charge, from the days of Elizabeth and James I. The designer and the architect between them have stripped the craftsman of much, if not all, of his former freedom as regards details, leaving him with little or no opportunity for the insertion of his personality or the continuance of his taste-traditions, and consequently reducing him to little more than a mechanical interest in his work.

Designer, as one is proud to call oneself, it is with regret that one sees "the man who makes," deprived of the vitalising mental outlet for his design-faculties: reduced, as it were, to a human tool, forbidden to originate, "theirs not to reason why." Commercially and technically, "progress" may gain by machine-like specialisation, but—the mental, as well as the physical, development of the man being more important than his economic output—humanity loses more.

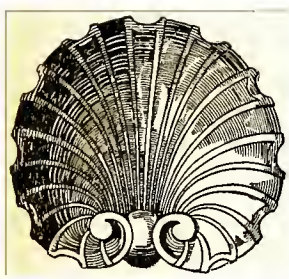
THE WILLIAM AND ANNE PERIOD IN BRITISH DECORATIVE FURNITURE—1688–1727 (Concluded)

WILLIAM AND MARY, 1688–1702. ANNE, 1702–1714.
GEORGE I., 1714–1727

Among the chief

CHARACTERISTIC DETAILS

of the William and Anne period is the escalloped shell. Originally worn by pilgrims as a sign that they had made a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. James at Compostella, in Spain, it was heraldically adopted to indicate that the bearer, or his ancestors, had been upon long pilgrimages, or at the Crusades. Its decorative character had long been recognised on the Continent. Carved representations of its convex side were now placed instead of acanthus leafage on the knees of the chair legs or at the top of the back over the central splat, whilst its inner or concave form was at times employed as a free pedimental ornament.



ESCALLOPED SHELL.

S SCROLL AND C SCROLL.

The C scrolls and S scrolls which began to take definite shape from the conclusion of Charles II.'s reign, remained in vogue during the days of William and of Anne, and were adopted by Chippendale, as we shall notice in our survey of eighteenth-century modes.

The boldly carved lions' claws clasping balls which terminate the fine settee in Colour Plate No. XLIV. are typical of the days of the First George—though one may assume with safety a few years earlier, when the back legs are not *en suite* with the front,—whilst masks of the eagle, the vulture, and—less frequently—other heads, are also devices of the Queen Anne carver employed either upon the backs or arms of his chairs or chair-back settees.

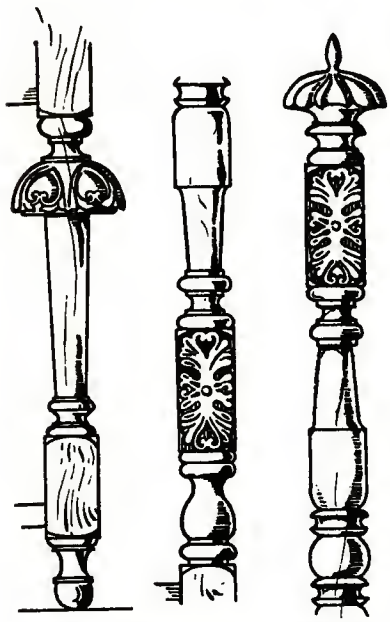
By far the most distinctive feature evolved during the later William and Anne days is the

CABRIOLE

or "bent knee" leg which took the place of turning or other shaping of legs. Though, in its eighteenth-century form, it may have been suggested by the goat's leg,—and Chambers tells us its derivation is from *Capriole*, a leap without advancing,—it is to far remote ages that the inception of the cabriole leg belongs. In much the way that Kallimachus is credited with the genesis of the Corinthian capital, is the origin of the cabriole leg or hoof attributed to the design suggested by the careless throwing of a tiger's skin with its claws over a stool. The supports of the oldest piece of decorative furniture — the seat or throne known as that of Queen Hatshepsu (some thousands of years B.C.) — are distinctly of cabriole form. The Greeks and Chinese used forms of cabriole legs upon their furniture, strongly reminiscent of the eighteenth-century cabriole; indeed, the Dutch during Charles II.'s days appear to have adopted the form as a result of their trade with China. For once, both Holland and England would seem to have been prior to France in the use of the cabriole. France added its curves to the repertoire of her details in late Louis XIV. and Louis XV. days.

WALNUT CARD TABLE WITH SHELL AND SHAPED UNDER-FRAME.

England derived the cabriole from Holland ere the time of William's accession. As will be seen upon reference to the diagram, tracing the evolution of the cabriole in a later chapter, in the days of Queen Anne it had reached its most typically English form, and its curves were becoming "standardised" for the ensuing fifty years' use.



DETAILS FROM CHAIR. BRIXWORTH CHURCH.

TURNINGS

Though the almost bewildering complexity and interminglings of shapes which occur in the previous period were to yield to simpler forms and the cabriole, the change is not immediately noticeable. Octagonal posts and legs are more characteristic of the style, but spiral turnery still persisted and a few specimens of square work are encountered.

WILLIAM AND MARY CHAIR. BRIXWORTH CHURCH. MODERN STUFFED SEAT.

Inverted cuplike shapes were as much signmanuals of William and Anne turnery, as the bulbous forms of their predecessors had been of Elizabethan and Stuart times, and formed the most prominent member, whether placed over octagonal or round tapering shafts.

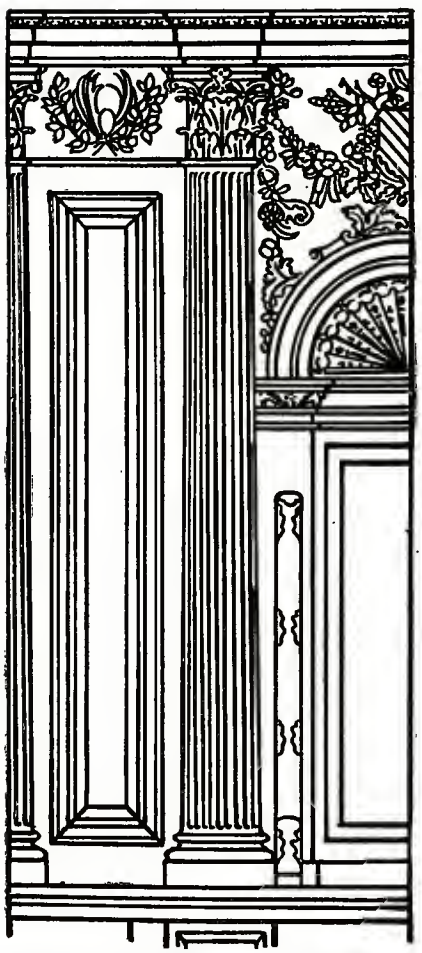
Deep rails were provided upon the underframe of tables, chairs, and stands—mainly, one ventures to think, that they might be shaped into the typical curves of the period.

During William and Mary and Anne's days tied stretcher framing was in vogue, but was decreasingly used from the days of George I.

MOULDINGS

throughout the period continued to be classic, freely rendered. The ovolo frieze was almost as invariably used upon straight-corniced cabinets of early William and Mary days, as upon those of late Stuart.

Broad bevelled mouldings, which had commenced during the latter part of the Stuart period, and were much employed by Wren in his city church-fittings, were among the few details common to both architectural woodwork fittings and decorative furniture, being frequently finished at the top with ogival or other arch forms of shapings.



PART OF CARVED PANELLING OF STALLS. TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE. *CIRCA* 1720.

Though pediments, both straight and shaped, were in vogue upon the bureaus and cabinets, even more characteristic are hooded cornices (of the fashion seen in the bureau secretaire illustrated in Colour Plate No. L.) surmounting shaped headed doors: as typical of the upper ending, as are the turned "bun" feet of the lower.

PANELLING

From the times of the Dutch William, Queen Anne, and the Georges, dining-rooms were panelled with oak or deal—usually in long panels at the top and shorter below, and decorated with landscape or figure subjects after the Dutch fashion. The upper panels being often far too wide and low to be sufficiently

PLATE XLIX

BLACK LACQUER SETTEE, CHAIRS AND TABLE, RED LACQUER MIRROR

Property of Viscountess Wolseley

Wall-paper at Wotton-under-Edge

Property of V. R. Perkins, Esq.

Early hoop-back chairs were somewhat tardy in obtaining popularity in their stretchered and inlaid forms; indeed, it was not until the abolition of the stretcher and their ornamentation by lacquer, that the splat and hoop-back outlines took permanent hold upon English taste. The absence of the stretcher usually indicates a date later than 1710. Viscountess Wolseley's finely preserved original pieces, forming part of the set illustrated, were, however, probably made a year or two earlier.

The glass of the red lacquer mirror evidences in the joints of its bevels the difficulties experienced, until several years later, of obtaining large plates.

Without attempting to fully describe the *minutiæ* of the process of lacquering, it may be of interest to point out that, as lacquer does not harden thoroughly, except in a moist warm atmosphere, it is necessary to place the work after each application of the lac, in a damp air-tight cupboard for some hours. In good work this varnishing and drying operation is frequently repeated, as many as thirty times, the surface being polished many times with charcoal rubbed down with rice paper, and further smoothed with a powder made of calcined horn and Imari clay, applied with a cotton rag dipped in oil.

Decorative lacquer work is roughly divisible into painted (flat and raised) and carved and incrusted.

Both the painted and the carved varieties are at times inlaid or incrusted with mother-of-pearl, ivory, jade, *lapis lazuli*, and other decorative materials.

Flat lacquer, ornamented with gilt patterns, is the simplest form of lacquered work.

Raised work is of a far more costly and elaborate character, necessitating months and even years of skilful patient labour, as the relief or *appliqué* has to be obtained by repeated applications of the mixture of lacquer and oxide of iron; each coat being rubbed, modelled, and dried. The lustrous metallic final coats are applied whilst the work is still "tacky."

Incrusting and inlaying the lacquer with mother-of-pearl, ivory, bronze, and tinfoil, greatly enhance the decorative effect.

The process of lacquering or rather of japanning, though derived from Eastern sources, was, as practised in England, of far simpler and, it must be confessed, of less artistic character.

Carved ornamentation of lacquer is more particularly of Chinese derivation, and usually of red lac;—red carved lac being indeed known as Peking lac.

Upon the parlour walls of a house at Wotton-under-Edge formerly in the possession of the Berkeley family, are yet to be seen the hand-painted Chinese wall-paper illustrated. Placed there at the close of the seventeenth century, its excellence of preservation is little short of marvellous, and enables one to note the ingenious art of the Oriental craftsman in varying and subordinating his design all round the walls to the breaks of the room. It must not be forgotten that our own East India Company had by this period a considerable trade with the Far East. This importation may therefore have been direct; it is far more probable, however, that this wall-hanging arrived *via* Holland.

held by their frames, frequently "worked out" and finally split so much that they were, with their frames, cut away, leaving only the lower and smaller panels; thus originated the "dado," that much-abused species of dwarf wainscotting.

WALL DECORATIONS

Cheap printed fabrics—calicoes, cottons, and wall-papers—were welcomed by the less wealthy classes at the beginning of the eighteenth century as substitutes for japanned panellings and tapestries.

To the days of William and Mary belong the unenviable initiative of the mechanical imitation in papers of marbles for hangings of parlours, dining-rooms, and staircases.

An advertisement of the period in the *Postman* speaks of figured hangings "in imitation of marble and other coloured wainscots."

The "tabernacle frames," a collective term for the constructed decoration of a door, window, or niche by means of columns or pilasters, with an entablature and pediment over, were much favoured until at least the middle of the eighteenth century.

HANDLES

Ere the Duchess of Marlborough's friend, "Mrs. Morley," came to the throne under the title of Queen Anne, hinges, handles, and escutcheons assumed an importance which will be better realised by reference to our comparative chart of accessories.

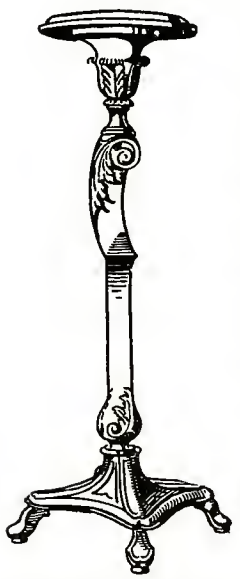
LACQUER,

the remarkable varnish of the East, was probably originally employed by the Orientals to render watertight and otherwise protect drinking vessels, its decorative application following.

Lacquered pieces such as are illustrated in Colour Plate Nos. XLVIII. and XLIX. are peculiarly typical of late Stuart, William and Mary, and Anne's days.

Panellings when not of oak, or of deal painted were lacquered, one room at Hampton Court—"all in jappan"—being especially admired by visitors. The period, indeed, is full of vivacious colour contrasts.

Lacquer had been imported in increasing quantities throughout the seventeenth century from the Indies. The great demand, and the impossibility of buying panels to fit exactly the spaces of furniture, caused both English and Dutch cabinetmakers during William and Anne's days to imitate this essentially Eastern art. Indeed, so much was lacquer work admired that, under its English title of japanning, its imitation was part of the accomplishments which parents found entered amongst the extras of their daughters' schooling.



GILT GUÉRIDON. QUEEN ANNE. BLENHEIM.

Despite Stalker's recommendation in his precise, quaint, and valuable treatise (published in 1688) on japanning and varnishing, of smooth, close-grained woods such as box, walnut, and lime for lacquering, during Queen Anne's days pine and oak were chiefly employed and have remained impervious to "worm"; it will almost always be found that worm-eaten lacquer work is either walnut, beech, or sycamore.

One of Stalker's amusing references is to "some who have made new cabinettes out of old skreens" . . . "but never consider the situation of their figures, so that you may observe the finest hodgpodg and medley of men and trees turned topsyturvy, and thus, instead of marching by land, you shall see them taking journeys through the air."

The Japanese and Chinese use the sap of their indigenous gum tree,

the Urushi or *Rhus Vernicifera*, a natural product, unlike the European artificial varnishing mixture of fatty oils, resins, and turpentine known as copal. The sap of the lac tree is obtained by tapping or scoring the bark during the summer nights with a bamboo stylus. The light-coloured resin, which speedily turns black on exposure, is collected in shells, in china, bamboo, or metal pots, ground, and strained through a hempen cloth to ensure even flow of the liquid. The next stage in the preparation of the raw lac consists of its coloration. Japan and China vary slightly in the materials, but usually gamboge is employed for the finer yellow transparent ground (chao chi), the base of the metallic gold lacquers, and imitations of avanturine. Cinnabar and, for the inferior work, colcothar are ground up with the raw lac to produce the red lacquer. The greenish yellow is obtained by means of orpiment. The black lacquers are prepared by adding iron or charcoal to the purified raw lac. The inner layer of various shells yield mother-of-pearl. Powdered gold, or brass and silver, are also added to produce the many metallic hues. In all fine lacquer decoration gold plays the chief part, ensuring a mellow richness. Indeed, the finest gold lacquers are so satisfying as to leave no desire for other decoration than the innumerable tiny metallic points which constitute their pellucid ground. Common Japanese lacquer is a mixture of lacquer and turpentine, with water obtained from a whetstone on which steel weapons or tools have been ground.

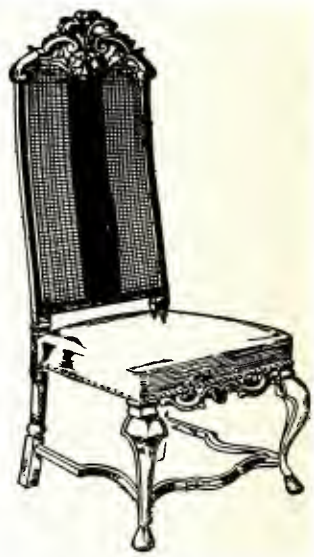
The early European substitutes for the Eastern lacquers, had neither the adamantine finish nor the brilliant glow of the true Oriental lacs.

The writer has not found absolute verification of the oft-made statement that pieces of furniture were sent by the tea ships to China and Japan for lacquering. When one considers the time occupied and the risks involved, it seems *a priori* somewhat unlikely that an extensive use of this method was practicable.

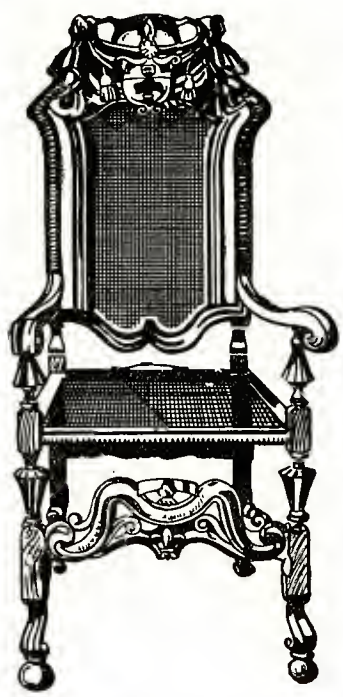
The important part played by the Dutch in lacquer work has been referred to in our survey of Dutch furnishing modes of the seventeenth century. France, also, long before the introduction of *Vernis Martin*, devoted much attention to the art of lacquering, and, whilst never attaining to the proficiency of the Eastern craftsmen, made very fair imitations of the process.

CHAIRS

Until almost as late as William III.'s accession, the stool was probably the more usual seat for meals. Its continental forms were also introduced into this country, but the increased numbers and varieties of chairs, home-manufactured and imported, from the days of the Restoration secured the pre-eminence of the chair henceforth.



WALNUT CANE-BACKED CHAIR. QUEEN ANNE.



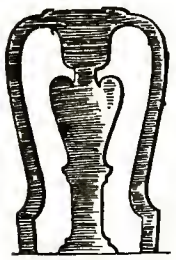
THE MASTER'S CHAIR, PARISH CLERKS' COMPANY. PRESENTED 1716.

Many as were the forms of the chair made in England from 1688 to 1727, the more decorative varieties may be conveniently divided into two main groups:—

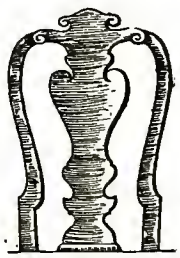
(*a*) Those with pierced, scrolled, deep rails usually cane-seated and with turned or scrolled legs; a type continued from the days of the Stuarts; and

(*b*) Those with sinuously outlined, hoop and splat backs, the especial products of the period —these latter usually upon cabriole legs and known as Hogarth chairs, after their contemporary, our British Rabelais of the brush.

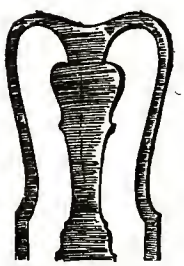
So far from the first or Stuart forms of chair falling into immediate neglect, the "scrolly" tendency in chair design increased during the earlier half of William and Mary's reign. Lightness was, however, more sought after, and possibly to that end, the straight stretchers of the underframe were supplanted by light rails to connect the legs, usually diagonal or X-shaped in plan, and certainly not so strong. More than one cause probably conduced to this alteration; men and manners may have become less rough, whilst the drier and more cleanly condition of the floor doubtless encouraged sitters to rest their feet upon it, instead of upon a front stretcher.



TYPICAL QUEEN ANNE HOOP-BACK, WITH BOLD SOLID SPLAT.



END OF QUEEN ANNE'S REIGN. OUTLINE OF SPLAT MORE ORNATE.



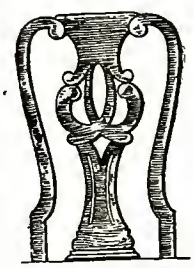
FIDDLE-SHAPED SPLAT.

SPLAT JOINING UPRIGHTS. SUPPORTED BY A SECONDARY RAIL. LATE QUEEN ANNE AND GEORGE I.

It is, however, upon the peculiarly characteristic curved chairs with central wooden splats of our second, or Hogarth type, that the lovers of "Queen Anne" modes look with most regard. Evolved at the end of the sixteenth century, the type was fully developed by Hogarth's day, and remains to this day a most satisfying adaptation of form to purpose. Its distinctive feature—and one seen for the first time in British work during this period—is that the splat backs are curved in their profile (spoon backed) in provision for the comfort of the sitter's back. The discomfort of the perpendicular back and the desirability of this provision has been discussed in the Chapter on Chairs in Part IV.

SPLAT JOINED TO UPRIGHTS.

EVOLUTION OF SPLAT AND HOOP BACKS.



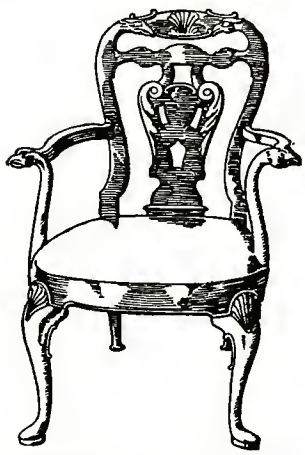
SPLAT DECORATED AND PIERCED. LATE GEORGE I.

EVOLUTION OF SPLAT AND HOOP BACKS.

The Hogarth chair is a very congruously curving piece of design in outline, with scarcely a straight line in the whole of its con-

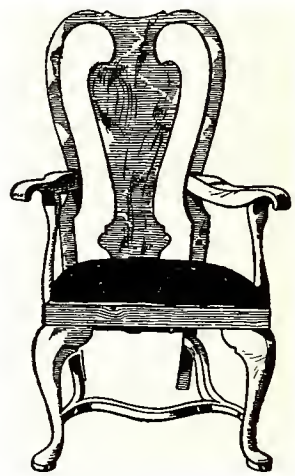
struction, the seat at the back being much narrower than at the front.

Interesting features almost invariably present in chairs and settees of this type are the curving in from the back leg, and the junction with the splat by means of a hollow immediately above the seat rail at its back, whilst one can scarcely avoid noticing that the curve of the cabriole was repeated in the upper framing of the Hogarth, or hoop-back chair or settee, in much the same spirit as the later Stuart seats echo in their crested upper



WALNUT PIERCED SPLAT CHAIR. LATE QUEEN ANNE.

SCOTTISH SPLAT-BACK CHAIR.

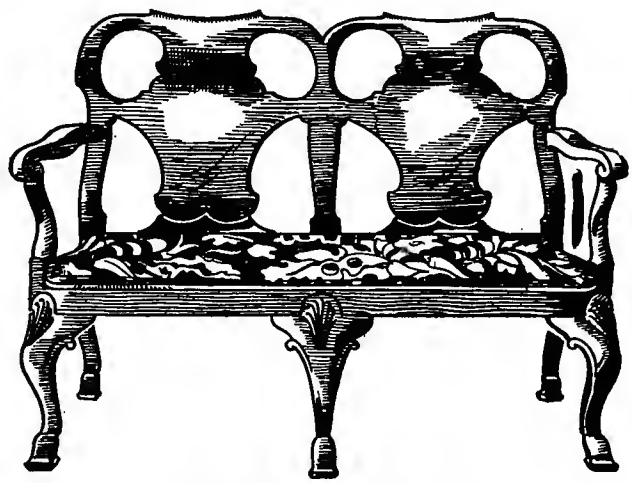


UNDERBRACED HOGARTH CHAIR. GEORGE I.

parts the lines of their lower frame rails. It will also be noticed that towards the end of Queen Anne's reign and half-way through that of George I., the central splat, instead of being carried to the top rail of the back, was stopped by a similarly shaped rail some few inches lower; the only advantage of the alteration being an assumed greater ease of handling: this, during the latter part of the first Georgian period, was supplemented and succeeded by perforated forms of central splat; a foretaste of the patterns of Chippendale. The splat-back chairs with rush seats, and Windsor chairs, represent a more provincial and economical taste in Queen Anne seats.

WILLIAM AND ANNE SETTEES

The built-up hairdressing and large periwigs of the latter part of the seventeenth century were probably responsible for the high-backed settees and chairs which diminished as the period proceeded.



SETTEE. EARLY QUEEN ANNE.

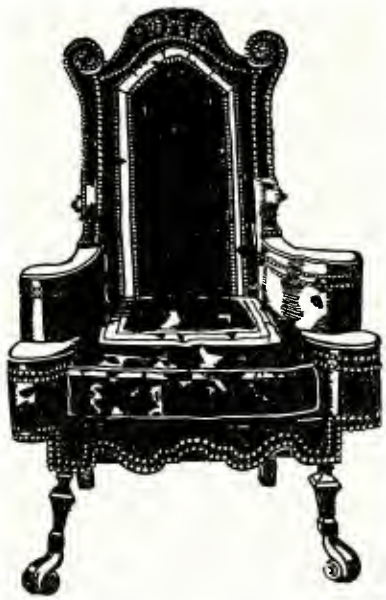
Two-chair-back settees are also products of Queen Anne's day: plain in their earlier patterns, they, about the period of George I.'s accession, developed considerable richness, though it is but seldom so ornately decorated a piece as Mr. Neill's, shown in Colour Plate No. XLIV., is encountered.

Early forms of the roundabout or three-corner chair, though appearing at this period, may be regarded as typical of the Chippendale era.

DAY-BED WITH APPLIQUÉ COVERINGS. PENSHURST PLACE.

UPHOLSTERY—DAY-BEDS

Genoese and English velvets were used in the upholstery of the withdrawing-room furniture, but the more refined taste of Queen Anne doubtless had much to do with the trend towards simplicity which is evidenced by the disuse of elaborate fringes and tasselled trimmings.



UPHOLSTERED CHAIR IN WALNUT.

Among the glories of Hampton Court Palace for many years were the needlework coverings of the furniture, worked by William's consort, Queen Mary, whose industry is commemorated in the court chronicles of the period.

Upholstery continued to grow in favour, caned seats from the days of "Good Queen Anne" being in the minority compared with removable upholstered seats which dropped into a rebate in the chair frame. Distinctly unusual and curious is the scroll chair in the Duke of Leeds' possession, reproducing the outlines of a settee in the same collection.

The

"DRAUGHT CHAIR,"

which in its crude all-wood forms had been in existence from Tudor times, assumed, during the period, outlines almost identical with those under which we know it under the various titles of grandfather, ear, or wing chair.

THE SOFA,

or sopha, was, like the ottoman, of Eastern origin, taking its name from the Arabic *Suffah*, designating a place or seat for reclining before the door of Eastern houses. Professor Skeat tells us that the earliest British printed reference to the sofa occurs in the *Guardian* of 1713.

TYPICAL QUEEN ANNE SATTEE.

PLATE L

A GROUP OF EARLY EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY FURNITURE, FROM THE COLLECTION OF W. H. LEVER, ESQ., M.P.

WALNUT CABINET-TOP SCRUTOIRE, VENEERED UPON OAK WITH BLEACHED, HERRING-BONED BANDINGS

Height, 9 ft. 8 in.; width, 3 ft. 4 in.; depth, top, 1 ft.; depth, bottom, 1 ft. 10 in.

INLAID SYCAMORE ("YELLOW") CLOCK

Height, 7 ft. 10 in.; width over case, 1 ft. 1 in.; depth of case, 7 in.

CARVED TABOURET, PROBABLY FRENCH

A MARKED increase in the demand both for chests of drawers and for pieces of furniture having provision for writing, is noticeable from the accession of William of Orange and his consort Mary to the British throne. The bureau, which satisfied both these requirements, was consequently most favoured, and its evolution received so much attention that the relative proportions and general design attained, ere the conclusion of Queen Anne's reign have been adopted as standards by succeeding generations.

Regard for the comfort of the writer's knees, usually insufficiently allowed for, by the projection of the writing flap, caused a compromise between the chests of long drawers extending the whole width and the open pedestal writing-desk. In this modification the centre is recessed but enclosed, as in Mr. Lever's scrutoire, and the inlaid writing-table of Sir George Donaldson, a few years earlier in period (shown on Plate XLVII.).

When upper parts were made for these bureaus, they were usually enclosed by two doors, having the characteristic Dutch

shaped headings; the doors were at times mullioned and clear-glazed, that the china or other curios might be seen yet protected, but more usually they were fitted with one large panel of wood, or silvered glass, and the interior provided with drawers, pigeon-holes or other compartments for clerical work,—often quite elaborately as in the illustration.

In addition to plain, banded, bleached, and oystered walnut, lacquer was frequently used to decorate the bureau and other movable furniture, and even the panelling in satisfaction of the passion for Oriental art which affected English and continental tastes at this period; being fed by the regular importation of Eastern curios by the East India Company.

The "Yellow" clock in Mr. Lever's collection resembles in its lower part that in the Victoria and Albert Museum, but the "seaweed" or "cobweb" marqueterie (which is so minute that only a full-size drawing could reproduce all its details) is much lighter in colouring. The upper portion of Mr. Lever's clock is, however, much richer than the South Kensington piece.

The inlaid, "bull's-eyed," and clear-glazed circles which were placed in the door panels of the long clocks, served both to show whether the pendulum was in action, and whether the clock was exactly upright, as it should be for accuracy. The minute numerals upon the dials are usually placed outside the minute divisions from William and Mary's reign.

The carved stool or *tabouret* is more probably of French than of English workmanship, being reminiscent of those set aside for the princesses and duchesses at the court, and for whose possession these ladies are said to have indulged in fisticuffs at times.

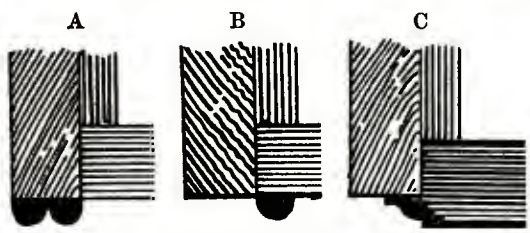
Somewhat later than the furniture, since they bear date 1736, together with the worker's or owner's name, K. Howard, the embroidered panels of the screen are quite typical of early eighteenth-century needlecraft.

1736
HOWARD

The importance of bedroom equipments in this period was realised at first in looking-glasses, such as that illustrated, alleged to have been possessed by Mary Queen of Scots, but obviously of late seventeenth-century design, and in

CHESTS OF DRAWERS.

The superiority of the chest with drawers over the chest without drawers, having manifested itself, chests of drawers (at first upon frames or turned legs, and with openwork in their lower parts; at a later period entirely enclosed with drawers) grew larger and higher until, in the "tallboys," the uppermost drawers could not conveniently be reached to pull out, nor could their contents be viewed without the aid of a "step."



THREE STAGES OF DRAWER TREATMENT.

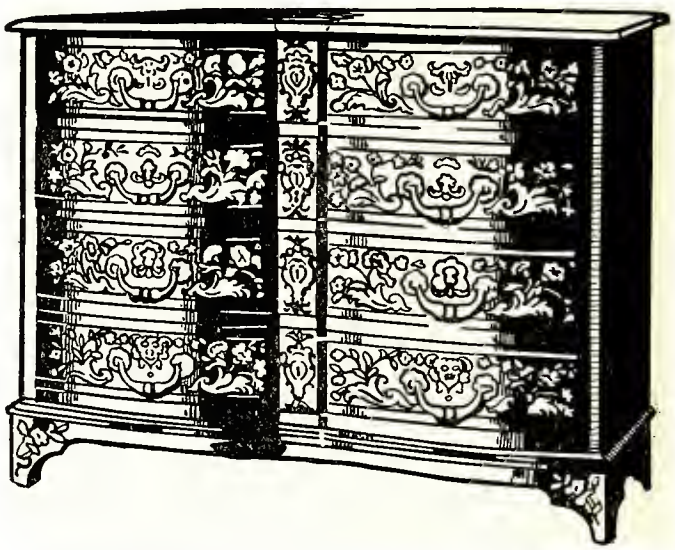
In many cases the earlier high chests of drawers with six legs were resolved into their two parts, the chest being stood upon the floor, and its stand utilised as a toilet-table.

Figured walnut veneer and inlays supplanted the raised mouldings arranged in geometrical patterns, bosses, split pendants, and pilasters, at the conclusion of the domination of oak in decorative furniture: small double beads placed upon the framework itself (A) were followed quickly by a single raised bead

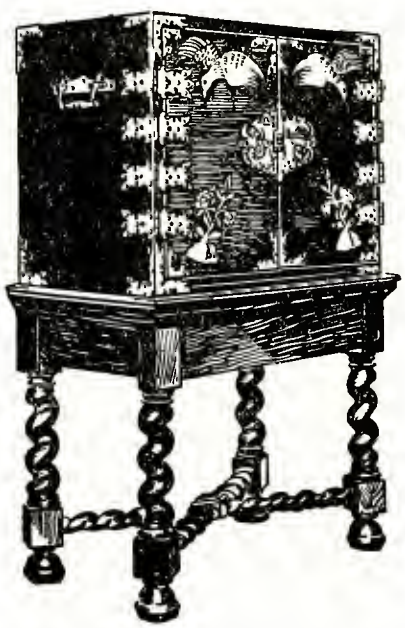
OAK CHEST. EARLY WILLIAM AND MARY. SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM.

planted on round the edge of the drawer itself (B); this in its turn was succeeded by a moulding worked on the face of the drawer front which is rebated out to overlap the framework (C).

These seemingly minor differences in the treatment of mouldings upon chests are all distinctive of Queen Anne and George I.'s periods. They assume the greater prominence in consequence of the marked tendency towards plainer forms characteristic of the furniture made during these two reigns, due in part to the bad times brought on by the continental wars of William and Mary, and Anne's reigns. Narrow bandings of herring-bone pattern inlay (or sandburnt laurelling), in conjunction with the brass handles of the period, sufficed to form decorative contrast to the oak, walnut, or laburnum veneered work. Carving fell into comparative disuse.



JAMES II. OR WILLIAM III. INLAID CHEST OF DRAWERS. SIR GEORGE DONALDSON.



DANTE ROSSETTI'S LEATHER-COVERED, BRASS-MOUNTED CABINET. EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY (UPON MODERN STAND). HON. PERCY WYNDHAM.

The development of the writing-bureau was the outcome of that of the chest. The bureau, the seat, and the chest are indeed the most important factors in woodwork modes of the half-century 1675–1725. More briefly summarising some notable points in the evolution of contemporary pieces of furniture :—

CABINETS,

enclosed as to their upper parts, and supported by openwork framing, of the simple type of the preceding period, continued in favour. They were usually inlaid with typical marqueterie during William and Mary's days, which was practically abandoned towards the end of Queen Anne's time. During the reign of this last daughter of the Stuarts, cabinets and bookcases were glazed by small oblong latticed doors, elementary and somewhat clumsy anticipations of the elaborate "trellised" or lattice work doors of Chippendale and his successors.

CORNER CUPBOARDS,

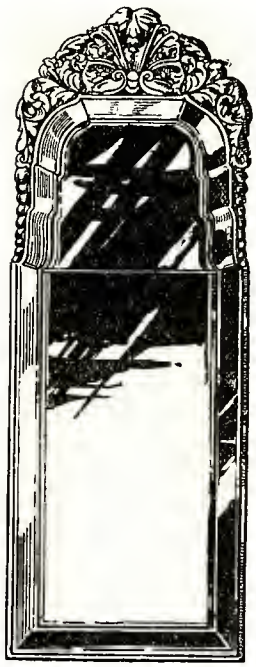
in which china tea-services and other prized Oriental ware could be displayed, now became almost as much in vogue in the lady's apartment as were the enclosed beaufett-cupboards, built into the wall or panelling, with an arch above, in the early eighteenth-century parlour or dining-room. Upon opening the doors of the beaufett-cupboard the convenience of its position was obvious, for it not only contained the housewife's stock of distilled waters, home-made wines and conserves, but was stored "with spices and with cinnamon and also orange," wherewith to brew the delectable bowls of punch which our ancestors enjoyed.

With the thinner walls which came with Georgian days, recesses for cupboards were no longer easily contrivable, and the separate mobiliary cupboard was more than ever necessary. Secret cupboards, of which many pre-Georgian houses appear to have possessed specimens, were for the same reasons less practicable.

BEDS

One is misled almost into a too regal concept of our early eighteenth-century forbears' sleeping furniture, by the pompous upholstered beds of state of the period, which have been preserved

in the palaces and treasure houses of the land: such beds were practically reserved for the visits of the great; and probably far from stately truckle and turn-up beds were used by a vast majority of prosperous citizens as well as by private gentlefolk. Such utilitarian pieces are too fragile to have more than a brief existence, in comparison with the "massive beddes of tymbre" of the preceding century, or even the upholstered beds of their own times.



QUEEN ANNE GILT MIRROR. GLASS BORDERED. *Property of* SIR SPENCER PONSONBY FANE.

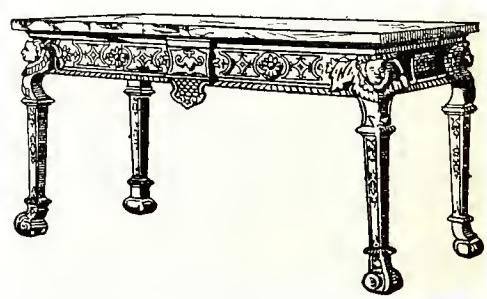
MIRRORS

Perhaps the most picturesque, certainly the most copied mirror frames of the early eighteenth century, are those in pine gilt or mahogany; which rely almost entirely upon their flat shapings, a bird or shell being introduced above the mirror.

Consequent upon the production of larger sized plate-glass, the mirror-overmantel begins to emerge as a fixed feature. Chimneypieces "grow smaller" in their openings, and are framed by bold bolection mouldings of marble.

TABLES

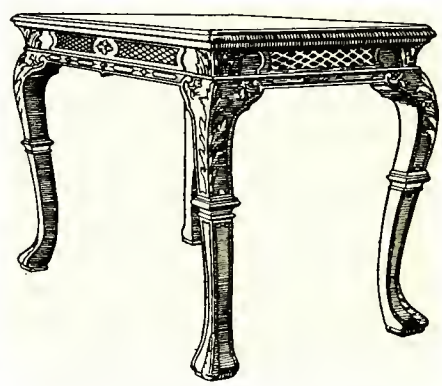
Until about the time of William and Mary the dining-table was usually in the hall, and was accompanied by a long stool upon which the family sat at meals. Among the most interesting evolutions in furniture design are folding card-tables, with tapering or cabriole legs, and club feet, of sufficient size for four-handed games.



GILT TABLE. LATE QUEEN ANNE. *Property of* EARL OF PEMBROKE.

;H-CASE CLOCKS,

as that formerly belonging to Charles Wesley, shown in Colour
› No. XLIII. and the inlaid example in Plate No. L., were in
wing both literally and figuratively some twenty years ere Daniel
›t — the Protestant Frenchman who fled to Holland, and, as
tect to the king, followed William to England — published in
, at Amsterdam, his book of furni-
designs containing several illustra-
of high-case clocks, as well as
ed overmantels for china. The
lfather or high-case clock was
descendant clothed in wood of
brass birdcage or bracket clock,
as is shown in the illustration of
Colonial furniture upon Colour
› No. XXXIV.; it being found
the uncovered movements of the open clocks became clogged
dust and lost their accuracy. The art of clockmaking was
vedly in high repute from the days of Tompion, the father
nglish clockmaking, who was Charles II.'s maker by appoint-
, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. The decorative
›ilities of the high-case clocks were soon perceived, and in
marqueteried details they followed the chests and cabinets of
›eriod.

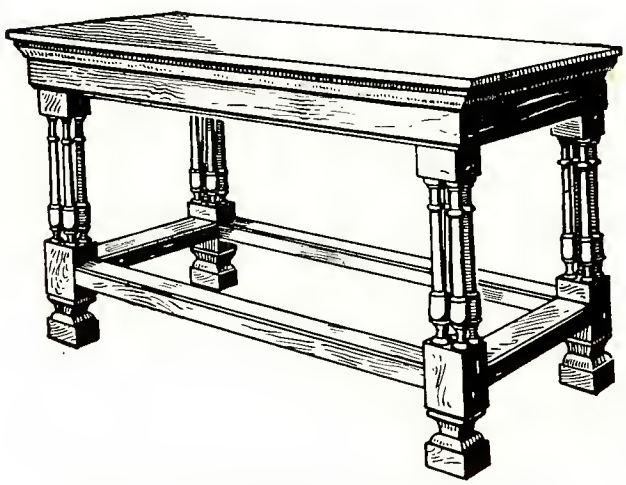


GILT CARVED TABLE. *Property of* LORD CURZON.

;maller, narrower clocks, sometimes called grandmother clocks, not
ding six feet in height, were made from the beginning of the
›enth century. Whether they received their title from their
›r proportions and more delicate detail, or because their height
›tted their being wound up by ladies, one cannot affirm.

SUMMARY

Almost the whole initiative during the reign of William and Mary, in the evolution of the new forms and types of British furniture and ornament, must be ascribed to the Dutch "invaders." Towards the conclusion of William and Mary's reign, forms became more restrained, less bulbous and rotund than contemporary Dutch work. Ere Anne became queen, the literal acceptance of Dutch models was under reconsideration, and during her reign the growing independence of treatment speedily resulted in the production of the first of the distinctly English styles which render the eighteenth century so profoundly interesting an era in decorative furniture history. The designs of Queen Anne furniture exhibit more reliance on outline and figure of wood, more reticence in decoration, together with a growing domesticity and endeavour to weld use and beauty together. It must not be supposed that decorative furniture yet existed in any quantity: probably only the "nobility and gentry" in the country and the wealthier merchants in the metropolis could afford such luxuries. Not only had England suffered considerably from William's continental policy, but, in comparison with their present-day population, Scotland and England must have been solitary places, as, almost until the accession of William and Mary, there was no town except London (which boasted some thirty-five thousand) with more than twelve thousand inhabitants.



OAK TABLE. KING'S CLIFFE CHURCH, NORTHANTS. WILLIAM AND MARY.

Industrial and financial ideals came in with William of Orange; one might almost say that those twin British fetishes, Respectability and the Banking Account, were Dutch importations. The National Debt made its début in 1693, whilst the Bank of England, its paradoxical corollary, was incorporated in 1694.

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